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Autumn • 1952

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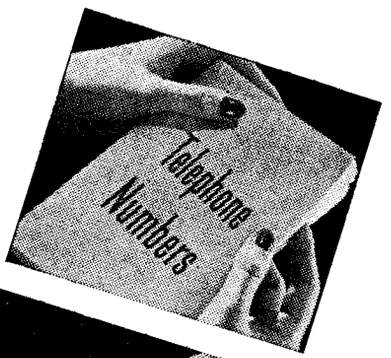

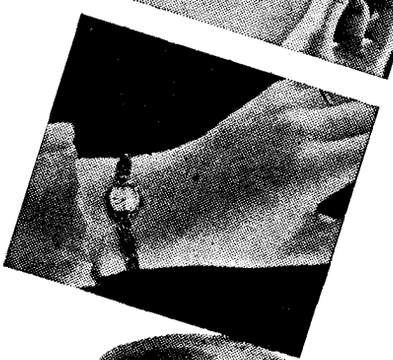

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

VOLUME 21 *Autumn, 1952* NUMBER 4

Conservatism: The Forbidden Faith

RAYMOND ENGLISH

To the sympathetic foreign observer, America reveals many paradoxes and inner contradictions. Of these none is stranger than the contrast between the national myth of Liberalism and the national reality of habitual Conservatism. In the following essay, an Englishman, who has lived in the United States for six years, probes into the causes and consequences of this paradox.

The Tyranny of Liberalism

IT IS INTERESTING to reflect that if, under pressure of nameless fears, Congress were to pass a statute outlawing Conservatives in the United States, there would be scarcely a ripple on the surface of American life. The status quo would be unaltered, for no American admits that he is, still less claims to be, a Conservative. Americans would simply remain as they were: they would all, without exception, be Liberals—not with a minuscule but with as large a capital "L" as possible. The most convenient documentary evidence of this socio-political factor is in certain interviews undertaken by *The New York Times Magazine* in 1948 with the object of establishing the meaning of liberalism. The object was scarcely attained, but one fact at least was established: all those interviewed—and they included President Truman, Senator Taft, Governor Dewey and Mr. Henry Wallace—were Liberals. As Peter Viereck remarked in 1949, " 'Conservative' (even Senator Taft prefers the word 'liberal') is among the most unpopular words in the American

✪ RAYMOND ENGLISH, associate professor of political science at Kenyon College, is a British subject who has been engaged in teaching and research in the United States for six years. He is the author of *Pursuit of Purpose,* an essay on social morale.

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vocabulary. To be praised as conservative has become an insuperable political handicap."[1]

One consequence of the Liberal consensus is perfect national harmony; another is almost perfect political confusion. Perhaps an observer who, like the present writer, has strong conservative instincts, ought to let the matter alone; for although Americans think and talk of themselves as Liberals, they tend to act and subconsciously believe as Conservatives. America is a nation of Conservative fellow-travelers. This is the clue to the stability of American society; for a broad substratum of instinctive conservatism is indispensable to the functioning of constitutional democratic government. If Americans want to talk in one way and act in another, and if they are happy, and if their political system works—why should anyone worry?

The answer to this question is, in the first place, that it is always advisable to worry about things that seem intellectually untidy, although it is not necessarily desirable to translate the worries into positive action. In the second place, it may well be that the split between American imaginings and American realities betrays a lack of political sophistication that can be dangerous in a time when America has to assume unprecedentedly great political responsibilities. Those who fail to understand themselves may be unreliable teachers and guides of others.

With this apologia, a confessed Conservative may turn to examine the fundamental intriguing problem of why liberalism is so popular and so devoid of definite meaning in the United States. The basic reason for this is one which a Conservative can fully appreciate: liberalism is enshrined and entangled in American mythology; its eighteenth-century formulas, repeated until they have become ritualistic incantations, are part of the national credo, inseparable from the origins of national independence, and impressed on the mind of every child at school. Ever since 1776, Americans have visualized themselves as peculiarly free and naturally good, and have indulged in a vocabulary—as De Grazia has expressed it—of iconoclasm. There is, in short, a peculiar though scarcely mysterious

[1] Viereck, *Conservatism Revisited* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), p. x.

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contrast between the conformity and the condemnation of eccentricity that mark American society, and the eleutheromaniac verbiage of American political terminology.

The verbiage originated with some of the greatest Americans: "Give me liberty or give me death!"—"The tree of liberty must be refreshed . . . with the blood of patriots and tyrants: it is its natural manure"—"God forbid we should ever be twenty years without such a rebellion." Jefferson once wrote of the French Revolution: "Rather than that it should have failed, I would have seen half the earth desolated; were there but an Adam and Eve left in every country, and left free, it would be better than as it now is." Whether Jefferson really meant what this appalling remark implies may be doubted; certainly there is only one pronouncement by a great leader that can parallel his statement, and that is the remark attributed to Lenin: "Let three-quarters of mankind perish, so long as the remaining quarter be Communist."

The genealogy of American liberalism thus takes its departure from sacrosanct verbal extravagances, and liberty and liberalism have had an invincible fascination ever since. In a pamphlet entitled "Be glad you're a *Real* Liberal," the National Association of Manufacturers, which yields to no one in its liberalism, deplored the semantic problems implicit in the great American myth. As Mr. Earl Bunting wrote, "The answer to why so many people have been fooled by the deliberate misuse of the word 'Liberalism' can be found in the fact that Liberalism always has had pleasing connotations to the American people." A mild understatement, this, of the problem that bedevils American political controversy.

There are doubtless other factors which contribute to the tyranny of liberalism in American politics. The past superabundance of land and natural resources, the brisk anarchic individualism of the moving frontier, the relative absence of foreign threats, the weakness of national and the vigorous turbulence of local government, the resentment of intellectual or spiritual authority, and, above all, the national spirit of optimism engendered by the consciousness of possessing a continent to play with—all these things helped to strengthen the grip of the liberal attitude or vision upon America. Thus the

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psychological conditioning of the great secession of 1776 was steadily reinforced by experience; even the grim setback of the Civil War seemed capable of interpretation as a triumph of liberalism, and the military Reconstruction of the South was carried out in the name of *Radical* Republicanism.

Then let's rejoice with loud fal, lal,
That Nature wisely does contrive
That every boy and every gal
That's born into the *States* alive
Is *always* a little Liber*al*
Never a little Conservative.

The Inhibition of Conservatism

There remains the comforting inarticulate minor premise that Americans are instinctive conservatives. Unfortunately, however, the national mythology prevents them from thinking about this. For one reason or another, the word "conservative" is traumatically repulsive. Even those Americans who want to use the word as an objective description are incapable of understanding it sympathetically. Thus, Leonard Woods Labaree cannot get beyond a crude materialistic definition:

> The attitude of a person who tends to support the existing state of affairs in respect to any particular aspect of social relationships in opposition to efforts toward modification. Conservatism . . . is an attitude of mind that tends to promote resistance to change. . . . Conservatism is not the monopoly of any one group of people; it manifests itself at all levels of society. Yet it is a common observation that a conservative attitude is most pronounced among the economically and socially privileged . . . etc.[2]

A more striking illustration of the inescapable pejorative coloring of conservatism may be found in Arthur Meier Schlesinger's most suggestive essay, "The Tides of National Politics," in which the author analyzes the alternation of "liberal" and "conservative" moods in American history. He tries gallantly to insist that the two attitudes of mind are valuable, necessary and mutually helpful; but his exposition of them is as follows:

[2] Labaree, *Conservatism in Early American History* (New York: New York University Press, 1948), p. xii.

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A period of concern for the rights of the few has been followed by one of concern for the wrongs of the many. Emphasis on the welfare of property has given way to emphasis on human welfare. . . . An era of quietude has been succeeded by one of rapid movement. Mere motion, however, is no proof of liberalism: it may be forward or backward or even in circles. The test is whether the object is to increase or lessen democracy. . . .[3]

If a scientific historian, endeavoring to convince himself that conservatism is a useful and necessary attitude of mind, can find nothing better to say about it than this, it is difficult to see how the unscientific American can ever hope to understand the meaning of conservatism.

It becomes clear that Republican and "anti-New Deal" writers are, from the point of view of practical politics, not only justified, but even inhibited by a conditioned reflex in their refusal to attempt to construct a body of conservative ideas. Conservatism would be the touch of death. Thus Walter Lippmann, after dabbling in socialism (which is a legitimate offspring of the liberal heresy), and after certain potentially conservative pessimisms about public opinion, reacted strongly against the New Deal in his *The Good Society*, which culminated in a yearning vision called "an agenda for Liberalism." Lewis Douglas, after a brief and anguished cooperation in the first New Deal, rushed out of Washington to deliver the Godkin Lectures on *The Liberal Tradition.* Former President Hoover, in transit on the American road, said that he preferred to shed the "isms" of politics, or to melt them "into plain Americanism," but maintained that: "The Republican Party [was] the conservative party in the sense of conserving true liberalism."[4] All American roads lead to liberalism.

Perhaps the most instructive case study of the phobia of conservatism among the Republican élite is Felix Morley's *The Power in the People*, which appeared in 1949 and aimed confessedly at the restoration of effective political speculation in America. Mr. Morley despises the New Deal and indeed everything that has happened in America and the world since 1933; his remedy is "back to Liberalism," yet in many ways his book appears to be a frustrated effort

[3] Schlesinger, *Paths to the Present* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1949), p. 81.
[4] Herbert Hoover, *Addresses on the American Road: 1933-1938* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1938), p. 272.

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to expound a conservative philosophy. The following statement from the first chapter sounds like the first blast of a trumpet call to patriotic, undoctrinaire conservatism:

> The American contribution to human progress has been outstanding. And it all traces back to a successful blending of the individual desire for advancement with a practical system of representative government. . . . Only a relatively small number of Americans would assert that there are no spiritual values in our governmental system. But those who continually endeavor to keep such values bright are scarcely more numerous. The majority . . . of contemporary Americans are indifferent to their heritage.[5]

But Mr. Morley would be shocked at the thought of being a Conservative. He condemns the British Conservative party as class conscious; and conservatism in general he dismisses as mere refusal to admit the necessity of any political change. Interestingly enough, Mr. Morley is prepared to defend reaction, but the flag nailed to his mast is the brave banner of liberalism, fluttered by so many favoring breezes that its device is no longer recognizable. For Mr. Morley himself, liberalism is at once "a middle of the road position";[6] "a reasoned philosophy, bolstered by faith in the essential goodness—or Godness—of Man";[7] and "a force truly of the spirit, proceeding from the deep realization that economic freedom cannot be sacrificed if political freedom is to be preserved."[8] Liberalism, in short, is sugar and spice and all things nice, plus laissez faire, and an eighteenth-century distrust of the state and the government (which are for Mr. Morley the same thing) as things hostile to the human conscience.

The net effect of Mr. Morley's thesis is depressing; and this, it seems, is the result of an internal conflict between the author's doctrinaire liberalism and his craving for faith in this great organic growth called the United States of America. He is hurt, not to say psychologically injured, by the realization that the America he loves could have betrayed for twenty years the doctrines he believes. Surely a little of the sanative calmness of conservatism, with its consciousness of fluctuating historic continuity and its distrust of all neat cure-all ideologies (whether laissez faire or New Dealism or

[5] Morley, *The Power in the People* (New York: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1949), pp. 1-2.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 251. [7] *Ibid.*, p. 154. [8] *Ibid.*, p. 196.

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socialistic planning) might help Mr. Morley, were he not engulfed in the honeycomb of American liberalism. Perhaps the clearest symptom of his anti-conservative inhibitions is his chauvinistic indifference to the simple facts of history, as shown in his determined refusal to recognize the English heritage in the United States. He pays tribute, it is true, to the Puritans (forgetting that they were responsible for the only militaristic, unconstitutional dictatorship England ever knew) and to John Locke; but the vital habits and institutions which made the American Constitution workable are never mentioned by Mr. Morley. One may search his pages in vain for any reference to the Common Law, the techniques of representation and debate, the relative freedom of the press, the jury system, the independence of the judges, and the subtleties of parliamentary procedure, all of which America owed, in 1789, to England.

Obviously, a political speculator who ignores historical conditioning factors can never achieve a conservative philosophy, for the first requirement of philosophic conservatism is a sense of history, of continuity in social and political growth, and of the influence of traditions and institutions in the forming of men's moral and political characters. America still awaits the political philosopher who will explain why America is as excellent as Mr. Morley says she used and ought to be. That philosopher will have to be a Conservative.

Conservatism Analyzed

It is time to look at the problem of conservatism in the United States from a more positive point of view, and it may be helpful to try to define more clearly what conservatism is or might be. Conservatism, as understood today, exists on at least three different levels of emotion or motive.

First, there is *instinctive* conservatism, that is, the profound, socially indispensable, and frequently cowardly human impulse to cling to the known and accustomed. Instinctive conservatism is, so to speak, the "life-wish," that

> . . . makes us rather bear those ills we have
> Than fly to others that we know not of.

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Americans have an ample allowance, of which they are largely unaware, of this healthy impulse; nowhere in the world do people talk so much of their "way of life" and their constitution as in America.

Secondly, there is an attitude of mind which must, unfortunately, be called *economic* conservatism: that is, the desire to cling to one's economic privileges if one is fortunate enough to have economic privileges. There is plenty of this type of conservatism in America also, sometimes concealed behind glittering generalities, occasionally expressed with a candor almost breathtaking in its brutality. It is this type of conservatism that most Americans probably visualize when they hear the word. So narrow a vision is unfortunate from every point of view; for economic conservatism in its extreme form is a materialistic simplification of nineteenth-century economic liberalism (as many who talk about "real" liberalism and all the variations on the theme of "anti-statism" are crookedly aware); in its extreme form, moreover, economic conservatism tends to become simply the reverse—*not the opposite*—of economic radicalism, otherwise known as Marxism. The basic assumptions of extreme economic conservatism and of Marxism are the same: man is an economic animal, motivated by selfish, materialistic desires; social life is a struggle for advantage and even for survival; the state and its government are a façade or an instrument for this struggle, and therefore political interference in economic and social affairs can never be for the general welfare but only for class or sectional benefit. It is quite startling to realize the similarity between the basic assumptions of the Communist Manifesto, Andrew Carnegie's essay, "Wealth," Herbert Spencer's *Social Statics*, Lenin's *State and Revolution*, and certain items of propaganda emitted much nearer home. Yet it is nothing to wonder at; for the same generation in Europe produced Utilitarian laissez faire and Marxist class-war doctrines—the head and tail of the penny of "economic man." It is not an accident that the exponents of extreme economic conservatism (or nineteenth-century liberalism) are more frightened by Marxism than are moderate liberals or moderate conservatives; for the economic conservatives can best understand the economic radicals: it is their own fundamental materialism that they see reflected in the

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dark reversing mirror of Marxism. At all costs, therefore, economic conservatism must be distinguished from the conservatism that springs from instinct or that which emerges from mature thinking about human society and history.

For there is a third type of conservatism that is closely connected with instinctive conservatism, but is opposed to the materialistic simplifications of so-called economic conservatism. This third level of conservatism may be called *philosophic* conservatism, that is, an attitude toward politics stressing the value of traditions, institutions (including forms of property), habits and authority; doubtful of the "natural" goodness and rationality of human beings; and based on the thoughtful observation of human affairs and especially history. This third and most fruitful type of conservatism has long been lacking in American political life, and its introduction might be a most valuable contribution to the thinking and decisions of future generations of Americans.

The Symptoms of Philosophic Conservatism in America

The failure of America to develop a body of philosophic conservatism is not due to the absence of essential raw materials. The foundations are laid for those who wish to build. The ideas of Alexander Hamilton—political and economic—and the ideas of the James Madison who wrote the *Federalist Papers* are a base as solid as granite. The writings of the German-American theorist of constitutionalism, Francis Lieber, and of John Caldwell Calhoun; much of the political ideology of Lincoln and of Theodore Roosevelt; something of the pessimism and skepticism of Henry Adams; the judicial opinions of Marshall and of Holmes—all these contain the material out of which American conservatism could be fashioned into a creed as rich and satisfying as that which British Conservatives have drawn from Hooker, Halifax, Burke, Coleridge, Carlyle and Disraeli. Obviously, American conservatism would, when developed, be an indigenous product, with recognizable features in common with British and European conservatism, but possessing, too, a spirit peculiarly its own and proud of its especially American character.

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This being the case, it is no business of the present writer to speculate on what philosophic conservatism in the United States might comprise. Yet it is interesting to notice the occasional recent signs of the emergence of such a concept. There appears to be, for example, a revival of interest in Burke, of whom Crane Brinton of Harvard remarked:

> All in all, Burke is the best teacher available for some of the political lessons we Americans must learn. . . . Anyone brought up in the Christian tradition should from the start be proof against the great error Burke spent his life combating, namely, that human beings are born naturally good and naturally reasonable, and that therefore they *must* be able to design a set of laws and a working policy under which everyone would always be happy and peaceful. . . .[9]

Mr. Brinton went on to point out that this assumption was the great error of the eighteenth century, and especially of Jefferson and Paine. Christopher Hollis once called it, perhaps unfairly, "the American Heresy"; it is, in fact, the great liberal heresy, which is also at the root of the Democratic Socialist heresy.

Out of the American academic world have come, in recent years, one or two stimulating hints of a revival of conservative thinking. Even the *New Dictionary of American Politics*, although it gives only five lines to "conservatism" as against nineteen to "liberalism," admits two possible meanings of the former:

1. General and uncritical opposition to change of any sort.
2. A reasoned philosophy, associated with the English writer Edmund Burke, directed toward the control of the forces of change in such a way as to conserve the best elements of the past by blending them into an organic unity with new elements in an ever-evolving society.[10]

This is a great concession, even if it appears to imply that reasoned conservatism is somewhat un-American.

On a different plane is Reinhold Niebuhr's *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness*, which might have been received as a veritable manifesto of philosophic conservatism and which, indeed, may still become such. Recently, in 1951, Francis

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[9] Brinton, review of *Burke's Politics* (Ross J. S. Hoffman and Paul Levack, editors; New York: Alfred Knopf, 1949), *The New York Times Book Review:* March 6, 1949.

[10] Edward Conrad Smith and Arnold John Zurcher, editors, *New Dictionary of American Politics* (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1949), p. 89.

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Graham Wilson's lectures at the University of Washington sketched the ground plan for intellectual conservative reconstruction. To summarize Mr. Wilson's concentrated thesis would be an impertinence, yet it may be said that his theme is the especial need for sober, intelligent conservatism in the present predicament of America and of the whole world. In Mr. Wilson's words:

> If we look at the contemporary scene, it is clear that these [conservative] ideas have considerable import in our effort to recover from the destructiveness of more than thirty years of war and revolution. The conservative attitude suggests the slow and painful stages through which we hope we shall move toward the restoration of a world that has at least some resemblance to the world of the nineteenth century. Utopia will not come, because man is not a being suited for a political utopia.[11]

Again, in 1949, the brilliant young poet and historian, Peter Viereck, made an eloquent plea for the establishment of philosophic conservatism in America in his book, *Conservatism Revisited*, which took the career of Metternich as its lodestar. Like Burke, like Crane Brinton, like Niebuhr, and, by the way, like the authors of the *Federalist Papers*, Viereck stressed the recognition of human frailty —that is, of man's proneness to sin and selfishness—as the foundation of the conservative attitude:

> Conservatism, which is for politics what classicism is for literature, is in turn the political secularization of the doctrine of original sin. In contrast, radicalism is Rousseau's "natural goodness of man" collectivized into a touching political faith in "the masses." Nazi radicalism equates Rousseau's Noble Savage with the racial mass; Marxist radicalism equates him with the economic mass.[12]

There is more to philosophic conservatism (and to Mr. Viereck) than this, but these words offer a useful simple distinction between the conservative and the liberal attitude of mind: the distinction between pessimism and optimism, the difference between the presumption that civilization, society and the state are built up by man with difficulty and after painful experiences of the evil of his own inclinations, and the assumption, on the other hand, that social arrangements and government are contrivances which man creates and can

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[11] Wilson, *The Case For Conservatism* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1951), p. 16.

[12] Viereck, *Conservatism Revisited* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949), p. 30.

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and must change and improve radically in the light of his natural reason and goodness. The Liberal has faith in the ability of human reasoning powers to solve social problems and even (to a greater or less extent) to remodel society and its form of government. Whether the powers of reasoning are to be exercised by the individual for the individual, or by the adult generation for society and the individuals who compose it, or by the majority of the adult generation for the rest of society and for generations yet unborn is a question on which Liberals (with a humility worthy of Conservatives) have never made up their minds. Hence, there have been many understandably varied phases of liberalism; for the Liberal, respecting the power of reason in himself and others, is always ready to be impressed by the latest "scientific" discovery in politico-social affairs, be it the Rights of Man, Utilitarianism, Free Trade, Marxism, economic planning or progressive education. This is why Liberals are so necessary; it is also why Conservatives are essential. The Conservative, too, has great respect for reason, but he does not consider that the operations of reason are confined either to individuals, or to the majority of adults, or to a whole living generation of adults. On the contrary, he thinks that a man, a group, or a single generation never has all the facts, and even if it had them would not possess the experience or the wisdom to grasp their full implications. True reason involves the long-term experience of mankind and of the society concerned in particular; true reason includes religion, customs and institutions which originated in forgotten but still valid lessons learned "the hard way" by our ancestors. Any short-term application of human reasoning power is certain to leave some vital factor out of the calculation, and most probably a factor of human psychology or sinfulness. So the Conservative is seldom enthusiastic about new discoveries in politics and sociology, because he suspects that human affairs are more complex and delicate than exponents of "progress" think, and because he is forever afraid of straining the minds and consciences of the men who must apply or suffer the new gadgets of politics.

Most men and women in politically self-conscious societies probably have a blend of inchoate conservatism and inchoate liberalism in their attitudes, with a slight bias in the direction of one or the

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other. The political significance of this fact (which was noted by Macaulay and A. Lawrence Lowell) is that circumstances in and around a politically conscious society at any given time will encourage a considerable majority of the members of that society to incline for a certain period toward one or the other of the two basic attitudes. This is the life-giving factor which makes for the alternations of experiment and consolidation, of progress and stabilization, which have marked the history of modern Western civilization.

Philosophic conservatism is undoubtedly the sounder and more permanently valid of the two attitudes: its skeptical sobriety must be ready to take over whenever the wine of experiment and enthusiasm for attractive new doctrines and panaceas turns sour. But the relative rightness or wrongness of conservatism and liberalism is not the most important consideration. These concepts are not clear-cut, logical ideologies; they are attitudes of mind—at their best coherent and fully discussed attitudes—but still attitudes only; they are what Plato would call opinions, not knowledge. They are working sets of rough principles for dealing with practical affairs, invaluable as bases for debate when men are searching for decisions. They are the two major attitudes whose dialectical interplay has governed the development of Western civilization. Their existence constitutes the best philosophical, sociological and psychological argument for the two-party system, which practical experience has shown to be by far the most satisfactory mechanism for free, popular, constitutional government.

Certain Practical Implications

One element in the dialectic of politics has, apparently, been ignored in American speculation and rationalization. Conservatism is often present in practice, but is steadily suppressed in theory. Explicable though it is on historical-psychological grounds, the refusal of the American people and their leaders to recognize the utility of philosophical conservatism has left a hiatus in American political life which in turn has produced intellectual confusion and some practical difficulties. Among other consequences, the strongly materialistic bias in much American political speculation (the attitude expressed in the phrase "who gets what, when and how?") is prob-

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ably encouraged by the failure of American politicians to set up certain roughly contrasted political principles. There are other consequences, equally disquieting, and to the discussion of one or two of them the remainder of this essay will be devoted. A brief survey of the present political situation in the light of the dialectic of conservatism and liberalism is very suggestive.

In the United States, and possibly in the constitutional-democratic parts of the world as a whole, the late 1940's and early 1950's have been, it is submitted, a period during which circumstances encouraged a conservative (pessimistic, consolidating, contracting) political and social attitude. The brief expansive, optimistic, liberal mood which followed the cessation of hostilities gave way swiftly to a mood of apprehension, while the urge to experiment turned into a yearning for security. At such a time men became conservative, inevitably.

Here an important phenomenon in the contemporary American scene is worth noticing: it is the fact that intelligent left wingers in the United States are now adopting a conservative attitude while right wingers are taking up radical notions of liberal optimism. Striking evidence of the new conservatism of the left wing may be found in Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.'s, excellent book called *The Vital Center*. From the point of view of the present enquiry, there are two very significant features of this book: first, its praise for responsible conservatism in general and for the responsible conservatism of the Republican party in the now distant past in particular (Mr. Schlesinger is here in complete disagreement with a typical right wing intellectual like Mr. Morley); secondly, *The Vital Center* is noteworthy for its wholehearted acceptance of an un-liberal, conservative view of human nature. The following quotation is most illuminating:

> Official liberalism had long been almost inextricably identified with a picture of man as perfectible, as endowed with sufficient wisdom and selflessness to endure power and to use it infallibly for the general good. The Soviet experience, on top of the rise of fascism, reminded my generation rather forcibly that man was, indeed, imperfect, and that the corruptions of power could unleash great evil in the world. We discovered a new dimension of experience—the dimension of anxiety, guilt and corruption.[13]

[13] Schlesinger, *The Vital Center* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1949), pp. viii-ix.

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This is the echo of James Madison's "men are not angels"; it is in startling contrast with Mr. Morley's pronouncement on the "essential goodness—or Godness—of man." Old fogies of philosophic conservatism, aware that Mr. Schlesinger's new dimension is as old as Adam and Eve, cannot but welcome the prodigal sons of liberalism into the shelter of the conservative fold.

It is important to realize, however, that Mr. Schlesinger's conversion to the assumptions of philosophic conservatism makes no difference to his practical political alignment. He does not candidly admit that New Deal liberalism is now inappropriate to the national mood; on the contrary, he calls his rediscovery of conservatism "the revival of American Radicalism." To point this out is not to disparage Mr. Schlesinger's sincerity; it is merely to indicate an inevitable consequence of America's lack of a school of philosophical conservatism and of a party more or less aligned with that school.

There is a common tendency in any two-party system for the parties to attempt to "steal each other's clothes" in order to get or keep power when the national mood changes from conservative to liberal, or vice versa; stealing political clothes is, however, unusually easy in America because liberal and conservative costumes are not marked with the owner's name. Thus Mr. Schlesinger's attitude is fully justified, since as long as the Republican party claims to be liberal and to offer a doctrine of radical change of policy, so long do the Democrats have the right to slip unobtrusively out of the gaudy dress of liberal optimism into the sober suits of conservative pessimism. The change of costumes is indeed a recurrent phenomenon in American history, and Mr. Schlesinger, who is no mean historian, must know well that he and the intellectuals of the Democratic party have been steadily changing their costume, role and character for several years past.

To a foreign observer, these procedures seem rather unsatisfactory and even a trifle demoralizing. Yet an American may argue that the superficial confusion is unimportant, since the American system has always worked well, even though Americans have never admitted the necessity for a conservative philosophy and party. To this, the foreign observer must reply that this complacency may not be justified in the future; and he must also point out that there

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results from the intellectual confusion of the parties at least one profound and possibly dangerous weakness in the whole political system.

Apart from the frustrating obscurity of issues in American elections, the great flaw in the party system is that the "swing of the pendulum" between the parties is so long as to be definitely uncomfortable, and bears too little relation to the prevalent mood of the people. If there is a dialectic in human affairs, and especially in popular government; if there is a diastole (or period of expansion, optimism and experiment) followed by a systole (or period of contraction, pessimism and consolidation); then surely it is desirable that the two-party system should roughly fit itself to the diastolic-systolic rhythm. This the American party system demonstrably fails to do.

The pattern of party predominance in the United States is almost entirely divorced from the dialectical rhythm of political mood. The pattern is, in fact, more or less as follows: At a given time, popular feeling grows radical, discontented and liberal, and demands new experiments; as a result, Party A comes into power on the crest of the wave and proceeds to carry out changes and experiments. In due course, the popular mood grows conservative, but meanwhile Party B, instead of accepting and exploiting the systolic mood, instead of promising conservatism and consolidation, proceeds to denounce all that Party A has done and promises to alter things again. Thus Party B lives up to the great national myth of being liberal, but it loses the elections because Party A hints at stability, the status quo and consolidation of gains, and naturally remains in power. Party B has, therefore, to wait with what patience it can muster until the mood of the people changes yet again to the diastolic; then at last, if it is lucky, Party B, promising change, gets into power. Now it is Party A's turn to clamor for new liberalism until such time as public opinion has passed through a triple phase once more. Were it not for the federal system, which permits the "out" party to keep up its morale by local victories, the "out" party would surely go melancholy mad. As it is, the "out" party becomes embittered, venomous and internally divided after twenty years in the wilderness, and the "in" party grows shabby and corrupt in the course

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of its long period in power. *Si monumentum requiris circumspice.*

This pattern of party predominance seems ridiculously wasteful of human effort and devotion since it means that the best years of a whole generation of one party may be frittered away entirely in opposition—in opposition that cannot but become ideological and somewhat irresponsible. For twenty years or more, half the political talent of the nation is liable to be running to seed; while the other half waxes fat and grows old, loses sight of its own principles, and adheres to political power from motives of nervousness, expediency and patronage. After all, when the years in opposition are liable to be so long and so lean, a party cannot afford to neglect any device that may extend its period in power.

There is no simple remedy for this predicament. Certainly Denis Brogan's prescription of twenty years ago—what America most needs is a good Conservative party—would not, even if it were possible, necessarily solve the problem. It may at least be said that the development in America of a sound, self-conscious body of philosophical conservative principles would be a healthy and stimulating factor in American political thinking, and might in turn contribute toward the shortening of the aching time lag between the victories of alternate parties.

There are, as has been seen, a few hopeful signs that philosophic conservatism may rise in the United States. That these signs have appeared in the academic world is gratifying, not only because it is an indication of the sense of responsibility among the intellectuals, but also because conservatism adumbrated in the universities is likely to have its foundations in honest history and philosophy rather than in the shifting sands of temporary economic interest. Assuredly, the time is ripe for the emergence of a subtle and sophisticated school of conservative thought in America, if only in order to force liberal thinking into clearer and more disciplined lines. It may, indeed, be suggested that America has needed philosophic conservatism ever since the Frontier was closed, and it is significant that Theodore Roosevelt began to move toward such a consummation immediately after that momentous event. His movement was, for various reasons, brought to a standstill; but there is reason to hope that it may yet revive, to bring, in the long run, new responsibility and fresh

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ideas to America's horse-and-buggy, all-liberal, all-things-to-all-men-at-all-times party system.

Conservatism in a Time of Crisis

It is probably true, however, that the American party system will continue to muddle along adequately even without a conservative philosophy. Many American thinkers, indeed, are opposed to attempts at rationalizing or clarifying party lines on the grounds that such attempts would either produce doctrinaire divisions in the United States or destroy the possibility of any party's achieving a nationwide majority. So Herbert Agar, and Professors Arthur N. Holcombe and Allan Nevins have argued, among others, and the opposite point of view submitted by a special committee of the American Political Science Association in September, 1950, appears to have taken little hold on the public imagination. It may also be admitted that the Republican party's experiments with moderate conservative candidates such as Governor Dewey proved electorally unsuccessful, and were dismissed cynically as "Me-tooism." (It is possible, however, that the electorate remained unconvinced, in 1948, of the sincerity of the conservative intentions of the Republican party leaders and their influential supporters as a whole. The record of the Republican Eightieth Congress was not conducive to tranquil confidence.)

Whatever the truth about 1948, it may at least be admitted that America's need is not an immediate revamping of the two parties: such a development may, indeed, come gradually, and will certainly be a success only when the American people have made certain slight adjustments in their political attitudes.

There remains, however, a final grave argument in favor of the development of a conservative philosophy in America. This argument has been implied in much of the preceding exposition: it is that, in a period of sustained crisis, hardship and tension, the liberal attitude of mind, with its optimism and its confused faith in progress through enlightened reasonableness, must seem inadequate. If, no matter where men turn their eyes, they see dangers, threats of aggres-

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sion, threats of inflation, and an apparently endless series of grim, unavoidable problems, then the flattering unction of liberalism loses its power to soothe their souls. They are face to face with the emptiness, not to say the chaos, over which circumstances and liberal platitudes had for a time drawn a screen. They become aware, as Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., in *The Vital Center*, or H. Stuart Hughes, in his *Essay for Our Times*, have become aware, of "intellectual chaos and skepticism and near despair."[14] The truth of T. S. Eliot's remark comes home:

> Liberalism can prepare the way for that which is its own negation: the artificial, mechanised or brutalised control which is a desperate remedy for its chaos.[15]

So does John H. Hallowell's clairvoyant statement on Hobbes, the great individualist and theorist of extreme authoritarian government:

> Hobbes already anticipates the conclusions which liberalism must ultimately reach in theory, once it has abandoned its Christian conscience, and which, in fact, it does reach in the twentieth century.[16]

In short, liberalism, unless somehow corrected and compensated by a counterbalancing force, destroys not only itself, but the society in which it is operating. Men who have relied too much on the attractive and temporarily valid assumptions of liberalism, and who have failed to formulate a more soberly pessimistic and traditionalistic-authoritarian alternative, are peculiarly subject to the mental depression which leads headlong to totalitarian dictatorship or to militaristic adventures of despair.

The American people are, doubtless, far from this probability at present, although disquieting symptoms of hysteria have occasionally shown themselves. Perhaps the instinctive conservatism of Americans, and the powerful, if in some ways superficial, hold of religion in America, offer adequate antidotes to whatever reaction an overindulgence in liberalism may bring. Even if this is the case, it remains true that the formulation of a vigorous and conscious

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[14] Hughes, *Essay For Our Times* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1950), p. 9.
[15] Eliot, *Ideas of a Christian Society* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1940), p. 13.
[16] Hallowell, *Main Currents in Modern Political Thought* (New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1950), p. 83.

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body of American conservative thought would be an added safeguard for the great tradition and the greater promise which the organic entity that men call America enshrines for its own people and for the world. For a nation which is expected to set the pattern of history for at least fifty years to come, mere instinctive conservatism and vague liberal myths are not enough; the combination savors too much of self-deception or hypocrisy, and its internal contradictions are too conducive to political neurosis. One remedy for this situation, and perhaps the least drastic and most natural, would be the steady and conscious encouragement of the recent manifestations of a trend toward philosophic conservatism. It is not a glamorous ideal; it does not hold out visions of a rosy dawn or a heaven on earth. Conservatism leaves these things to the Liberals, merely insisting that, when the dawn turns out to be gray and heaven to be unaccountably imperfect, men should be prepared gladly to accept the imperfect and to work patiently to retain the things which they have achieved and found on the whole to be satisfactory. There is intellectual strength for individuals and moral stability for a society in the possession of a body of reasoned conservative ideas.*

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The Fear of Ideas

JULIAN P. BOYD

To be afraid of ideas, any idea, is to be unfit for self-government.
—ALEXANDER MEIKLEJOHN

THE GENERATION that produced George Washington, Richard Henry Lee and Thomas Jefferson deserves to be ranked as great, along with the age of Pericles and the age of Elizabeth. It included not only these three, but also Wythe, Madison, Pendleton, Henry, Marshall and Mason. Their glory was not so much in what they achieved as in what they sought, for revolution in itself is not necessarily a glorious thing; it may indeed serve an ignoble part. It becomes glorious when it is governed by a transcendent ideal. The American Revolution possessed such an ideal, and its leaders were possessed by it. That ideal was, in essence, a total repudiation of the fear of ideas. It rejected with the passion and indignation of youth the concept that some ideas were so reprehensible that the civil authorities could legitimately suppress them.

The genius who was the chief spokesman for this concept asserted:

> . . . that the opinions of men are not the object of civil government nor under its jurisdiction, that to suffer the civil magistrate to intrude his powers into the field of opinion and restrain the profession or propagation of principles on supposition of their ill tendency is a dangerous policy, and that truth is great and will prevail if left to herself; that she is the proper and sufficient antagonist to error and has nothing to fear from the conflict unless by human interposition disarmed of her natural weapon, free argument and debate, errors ceasing to be dangerous when it is permitted freely to contradict them.

The one idea that Mason, Jefferson and their compatriots permitted themselves to fear was the idea that some ideas should be repressed because repugnant or abhorrent. They chose instead the

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noble belief that man was capable of distinguishing the good from the bad, that he was endowed with reason and was, if left free to choose, capable of choosing with justice and fairness; that improvement in his condition could only come about in this way; that, in short, he was capable of self-government. Freedom to think, freedom to examine and discuss any proposition, freedom in the interchange of ideas, freedom of utterance, this is the heart of a declaration of rights as it is the basis of government in a republic.

We should err in cherishing the Declaration of Rights as an unchanging, absolute precept. Virginia's primacy in asserting these noble principles should not blind us to the fact that the basis and foundation of government there bequeathed to us was of ancient and diverse origin. The propositions that all men are created equally free and independent and have certain inherent natural rights of which they cannot by any compact deprive or divest their posterity, among which are the enjoyment of life and liberty with the means of acquiring and possessing property and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety; that sovereignty rests in the people; that, when any government should be found unworthy of trust, the majority of the people had an indubitable, inalienable and indefeasible right to reform, alter or abolish it—these are concepts of ancient lineage. The law of nature and of nature's God from which they stem was familiar to Aristotle and Cicero no less than to Locke and Bolingbroke and Mason and Wythe. This was the fixed and immutable standard by which the everchanging forms of civil law were to be judged. It applied to all men at all times; it was the only absolute.

Today, even that is challenged by philosophers, and we do no dishonor to the Founding Fathers when we point to the fact that declarations and bills of rights are not themselves among the unchanging absolutes. In different times and places varying rights have been asserted with varying emphasis. Virginia, in 1776, set forth sixteen propositions; Massachusetts, in 1780, thirty; the United States, in 1790, ten. "Who," asked James Wilson in the Federal Convention of 1787, "will be bold enough to enumerate the rights of the people?" And who, we must ask ourselves today, is qualified to interpret the rights of the people, enumerated or not?

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We do not honor the Founding Fathers by worshiping a mere piece of paper. The Declaration of Rights, handed to us at no one knows what cost of blood and treasure, is meaningless unless we ask this question in all humility and with the same high purpose that animated those who promulgated it in 1776. For we are ourselves founding fathers. We, too, must reassert the great Declaration of Rights, find what in it is most valued, and in turn recommend it to our posterity as the basis and foundation of their government. We must be worthy before we can praise. Who is qualified to interpret our rights? Who is authorized to assess the conflict of ideas that these rights inevitably entail?

Let us turn for perspective to those who first proclaimed this basis and foundation of government. The principle of equality of men and of the sovereignty of the individual that they proclaim was a bold and elevated concept, but it was also potentially the most dangerous concept that a people could assert. It was a doctrine embodied in the Virginia Declaration of Rights and in the Declaration of Independence; it was one that permeated the very air of the age of enlightenment. It became for Jefferson and others the holy cause of liberty, and if we read the words closely we begin to understand with what exaltation and aspiration they greeted the dawn of a new day.

The first proposition of the Virginia Declaration of Rights asserts that all men have certain rights of which they cannot by any compact deprive or divest their posterity. We shall honor the Founding Fathers most if we inquire humbly into the meaning of these words for us. For one thing, they mean, as Montaigne asserted, there are some things that a man cannot perform, even for his country. He cannot suffer his government to deprive posterity of its rights. If he alone were involved, he might timidly yield up his rights and deserve his enslavement; but he, too, has a posterity, and he is bound to pass on his body of rights unfettered unless he wishes to rob them and bring shame upon himself. And De Tocqueville declared:

> Of all political effects produced by the equality of conditions, the love of independence is the first to strike the observing and to alarm the timid, nor can it be said that their alarm is wholly misplaced, for anarchy has a more formidable aspect in democratic countries than elsewhere.

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Here was the great risk that the Founding Fathers took. It was one that they embraced with courage and faith. Many times in our history, that faith has been put to the test. Many times the fear of ideas has alarmed the timid, swayed public policy, driven us from the steady course dictated by allegiance to a faith. That which arose in 1798, with the passage of the Alien and Sedition Acts, was not the first or the last, but it exhibited characteristics that may help us to arrive at the answer to a question as to who is qualified to interpret the people's rights.

As a nation, we were then confronted with the specter of tyranny in Europe. Many, frightened by the passions of revolution and by the unguided and uncontrolled tyranny of the mob, sought to protect the American institutions by repressive laws. We need not question the sincerity of their motives. No doubt, some men honestly believed that the best way to protect American liberties was to erect barriers against aliens, to curb freedom of speech and to stifle criticism of government. We may still, however, question the quality of their courage and the extent of their understanding of the nature of the American people and of American institutions. Lacking in faith, they failed to grasp the sense of destiny of the American nation. They were afraid of ideas, and snatched at the force of government as the first weapon with which to combat the new threat of tyranny. In so doing, they might have done irreparable injury to these infant institutions. They might have strangled at birth this new nation, the earth's best hope.

Fortunately, there was at hand the greatest of all spokesmen for freedom, though in reality it was he rather than foreign ideas that was the object of the fear of those who sought to alleviate fear by suppressing ideas. The people in 1800 elected him to the office of chief magistrate, vindicating his faith in their judgment and repudiating the lack of faith of those who could not trust the people. In his inaugural address, Thomas Jefferson spoke, as no one else could have, for a people who grounded their government on faith rather than fear, who trusted each other to decide wisely what course the nation should pursue, who repudiated the concept that some ultimate decisions could not be safely entrusted to the people but must be decided by the rulers.

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I know, indeed [Jefferson declared], that some honest men fear that a republican government cannot be strong, that this government is not strong enough. I believe this, on the contrary, the strongest government on earth. I believe it the only one where every man, at the call of the law, would fly to the standard of the law and would meet invasions of their public order as his own personal concern. Sometimes it is said that man cannot be trusted with the government of himself. Can he then be entrusted with the government of others or have we found angels in the form of kings to govern him? Let history answer this question.

When Jefferson uttered these words of confidence, the United States of America was a nation of less than four million souls. She was still at the mercy of the European balance of power. She was, in Jefferson's words, "engaged in commerce with nations who feel power and forget right." She had no army or navy worthy of the name. Her citizens were divided. She had emerged from a revolution that was so bitter as to leave serious question as to whether the country would survive the contest of opinion. But she was, as Jefferson knew, advancing rapidly to destinies beyond the reach of mortal eye, and he, more clearly than any other, perceived that America's survival and her capacity to meet her destiny depended not on armies or navies or material things, but on faith. She could lose her soul by trying to defend it with repressive laws. So, at bottom, his faith rested on that greatest of all weapons, a bill of rights. Not fear but faith, not timidity but confidence in the justice and good sense of his fellowmen, led him to uphold the sacred principle that, though the will of the majority in all cases is to prevail, that will, to be rightful, must be reasonable; that the minority possess their equal rights which equal laws but protect, and to violate which would be oppression. That minority might entertain hateful ideas. It might possess abhorrent beliefs. It might claim the benefit of liberties in order to curb liberties. It might aim, indeed, at the overthrow of government. But it possessed equal rights under equal laws. "Therefore," declared Jefferson, "if there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this union or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it." Here was the most exalted expression of confidence in the people that ever fell from the lips of a chief magistrate.

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Today, we are faced with a tyranny blacker than any feared by Jefferson. We know that there are traitors in our midst. We know that there are some who would overthrow this government and who are working furtively and despicably to achieve that end. Can we now extend to these enemies the protection of equal rights and equal laws? We have met a destiny that was far beyond the wildest aspirations of the Founding Fathers. Can we, in our strength, extend the Bill of Rights to the protection of those whose ideas we hate, when the Founding Fathers, in the day of our infancy, dared to do so? "Let history," as Jefferson reminded his hearers in 1801, "answer this question." Who now remembers the public leaders in 1798 who resorted to force in order to thwart a hateful idea? Who now venerates the legislator who voted for the Alien and Sedition Acts? Who now praises the judge who imprisoned those who were found guilty under those acts which Jefferson declared to be "as palpably unconstitutional as if Congress had ordered the citizens to fall down and worship a golden calf"? We remember and praise instead those great statesmen, Mason, Jefferson, Wythe and the many others who preferred faith to force, who believed that the Bill of Rights extended to the ideas hated as well as to those revered, who were ready to defend with their lives the idea that equal rights, protected by equal laws, were possessed by the misguided minority as well as by the enlightened majority.

In the past few years, we have been told that we can no longer rely upon the beliefs of the eighteenth century to resolve the appalling problems and conflicts of the twentieth. Of what consequence is a bill of rights if it does not extend equally to those whom we hate and whose ideas we abhor? What does freedom mean if it does not include the right to argue against freedom? A bill of rights so conceived is only another name for tyranny. The Founding Fathers were not afraid to permit the people a right of choice among ideas freely expressed, freely accessible. We shall praise them wisely and with understanding if we share their faith and are able to recommend the principles of the Declaration of Rights to our posterity as unsullied as those principles were handed down by them to us.

But can we today say that we are doing so? We have been seized in a mounting wave of hysteria. Test oaths of increasing severity

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are being required of public servants, teachers, librarians and others, and are being proposed even as a condition precedent for those about to enter professions or trades. Books are being banned or suppressed, not because they contravene laws but because of the ideas they contain. American citizens may be deprived of livelihood or even of their liberties by *ex parte* proceedings based upon accusations made by anonymous persons. Arraigned at the bar of public opinion, innocent persons may now be required to prove themselves not guilty. And in many other respects, we are in danger of doing violence to the letter and the spirit of the Bill of Rights.

The issue that is joined here is a never-ending one. It was faced by Pendleton, Lee, Jefferson, Mason and others who set in motion the great events of May, June and July, 1776. It was faced by those who opposed the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798. It cannot be evaded by us. Each of us, bound by the overriding duties of the citizen, must weigh, balance and determine what for us is the wise and just policy when the mighty opposites of national survival and the civil rights of the individual clash. Never in our history have they come into such violent conflict as in our day, and the dreadful climax seems still to be ahead of us. We cannot apply an easy formula to obtain an answer. We cannot resort to doctrinaire solutions. For neither the right of national self-preservation nor the right of free speech is an absolute; both are conditioned by constitutional limitations. Survival without individual liberty is not worth having. Individual liberty purchased at cost of national existence would be meaningless. There must be a weighing and assessment of the values, constantly, unremittingly, now and in the long future.

Who is to decide? The lawyer, the legislator, the judge? Until there is rebuttal from the profession itself, we may assume that most lawyers agree with the leading article that appeared in the principal vehicle of expression of the profession, the *Journal of the American Bar Association*. That article quotes the phrases of Jefferson's first inaugural in which a noble belief in the free and untrammeled traffic in ideas is asserted. It also quotes the following famous declaration of Justice Holmes: "If there is any principle of the Constitution that more imperatively calls for attachment than any other, it is the principle of free thought, not free for those who agree with us,

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but freedom for the thought that we hate." It then concludes that "freedom for the thought we hate is not protected by any principles of our constitution."

The Supreme Court of the United States, in a historic decision, has agreed with this view. That decision upheld the constitutionality of an act of Congress aimed at suppression of the Communist party. The decision, in effect, disfranchised that party. It specifically stated that the conspiracy to organize the Communist party and to teach and advocate the overthrow of the government of the United States by force and violence created a clear and present danger of an attempt to overthrow the government. Such conspiracy for such an end is hateful and to be reprobated by all. But to whom do we, as responsible citizens, attend in this matter of denying equal rights under equal law to all citizens? To the lawyer who speaks for his profession? To the legislator who passes the law? To the jurist who interprets it in the constitution?

We, as citizens possessing ultimate sovereignty, have a higher responsibility. The lawyer, the legislator, the jurist are limited and circumscribed by constitutional and legal bounds. We must decide the issue in our individual consciences on the high level of wisdom and public policy, and use reason and justice, courage and faith, as our guides. We shall decide in our several ways. Ignorance, passion and hatred will sometimes cloud our judgment. We shall be swept along by waves of hysteria and, at times, blown from our course by erratic storms and enthusiasms. But if we have faith, we can, in calmer moments, perceive that history offers no hope of reward for those who fear ideas. Theirs is the losing side. They have no comfort save the cold chill of their nightly dread. They warm themselves under no splendid sun of confidence in the people's capacity for self-government.

There are many in our own day whom we perceive to be keeping faith with Mason and Jefferson and Wythe. Mr. Justice Douglas, in the case cited above, delivered a dissenting opinion that rejected with clear common sense the idea that a handful of Communists could create such a danger to the United States as to justify the most extensive invasion yet made in the rights guaranteed by the First Amendment. "Some nations, less resilient than the United

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States," he declared, "might have to take drastic steps and jail these men for merely speaking their creed, but in America, they are miserable merchants of unwanted ideas; their wares remain unsold. The fact that their ideas are abhorrent does not make them powerful." This much is common sense, reflecting a sure understanding of the American people, of their ideas, and of their history. But it is also fitting that we note the appeal made by the dissenting jurist to the principles of Thomas Jefferson:

> The First Amendment [Mr. Justice Douglas declared] makes confidence in the common sense of our people and in their maturity of judgment the great postulate of our democracy. Its philosophy is that violence is rarely, if ever, stopped by denying civil liberties to those advocating resort to force. The First Amendment reflects the philosophy of Jefferson "that it is time enough for the rightful purposes of civil government for its officers to interfere when principles break out into overt acts against peace and good order."

The author of this enlightened dissent might also have appealed to Jefferson's apostrophe to the Bill of Rights in his first inaugural:

> Freedom of religion, freedom of the press, and freedom of person under the protection of the *habeas corpus*, and trial by juries impartially selected—these principles form the bright constellation which has gone before us and guided our steps through an age of revolution and reformation. The wisdom of our sages and the blood of our heroes have been devoted to their attainment. They should be the creed of our political faith, the text of civic instruction, the touchstone by which to try the services of those we trust. And should we wander from them in moments of error or of alarm, let us hasten to retrace our steps and to regain the road which alone leads to peace, liberty and safety.

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Music Lovers

FRANCES RODNEY COLVIN

Wearing culture, she has come
Shuddering with tedium;
Hiding concupiscent palms,
He speaks convincingly of Brahms,
And their flickering eyes slip around
Each other—around and around,
Probing all the ins and outs,
All the promises and doubts.

She has come (wearing sable)
Lately from the dinner table.
He has lingered in the bar
For vintage brandy and cigar.
And they both are content and ready
For art—oh, content and ready
For horns and strings to amuse
With something not too abstruse.

In a wet woods, in a dream,
The sable runs down to the stream
Where the speckled minnows play.
On a round hill, on a dark day,
The brandy grapes gleam purple and brown
Under leaves that the rain pressed down;
And Brahms walks, humming a theme,
In a wet woods, in a dream.

✪ The poetry of FRANCES COLVIN has appeared in a variety of publications. Miss Colvin is secretary of the Burbank, California, Symphony Association.

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Sinclair Lewis

Apostle to the Philistines

GEORGE J. BECKER

THIRTY YEARS AGO, most Americans lived in, came from, or at least had had fairly intimate experience with small towns. Village America dominated patterns of thought and of behavior to an extent that seems scarcely credible today. Although that dominance was being rapidly undermined by the growth of great industrial cities and their dormitory suburbs, so that the census of 1930 would establish that nearly half of our population lived in metropolitan areas—in 1920, the village was still glorified as "Friendship Village," the cradle of democracy, the nursery of individuality and genius, the repository of all the abiding virtues.

Then, within a few months, there came blasts from two new writers, Sherwood Anderson and Sinclair Lewis, which forever shattered that image, creating a literary phenomenon known as "the revolt from the village" and precipitating a controversy whose alarms and excursions have become largely meaningless as the village has been reduced to impotence in national life, sapped of its youth by the automobile and the factory, sterilized in its culture by the movies and the radio. The chief figure of that controversy was Lewis, who, for thirty years, whooped periodically down Main Street, shooting wildly to right and left while the citizens took cover.

Sinclair Lewis was filled with crusading zeal. His attack on contemporary society was overt, tireless and hyperbolic. He blew up huge balloons labeled "Babbitt," "Gantry," "Planish," and then punctured them with howling glee. He had little sense of social process, little concern for the detailed workings of institu-

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tions. Like his own Carol Kennicott, he began everywhere at once and turned himself, if not the world, topsy-turvy, without indicating specifically what he wanted done. Always in the back of his mind was the biting reminder that the half-men whom he pictured were not those promised to this Eden—that when the pioneering fathers sailed in thought and aspiration to the far Hesperides, it was a vision of the transcendent man that led them on. For thirty years, Lewis lambasted, cajoled, ridiculed and threatened without arriving at any definitive diagnosis of what was wrong with his country or his countrymen. All his life, he was seeking the cause of the multiple malaise which he encountered everywhere. He never isolated the virus, although some of his novels filtered very fine.

The best statement he ever made is one contained in the speech accepting the Nobel Prize at Stockholm, when he spoke of himself as "a writer whose most anarchistic assertion has been that America, with all her wealth and power, has not yet produced a civilization good enough to satisfy the deepest wants of human creatures."

It may be that Lewis has played a strong and decisive part in shaping constructive changes. It may be that his countrymen have shed the crude vesture of a Babbitt for a Brooks Brothers number equally inappropriate to men of destiny. It may be that he has had little or no effect on his countrymen, whose enthusiastic reception of his writing may have merely indicated their own readiness to turn away from the attitudes and antics he ridiculed. In any event, it is the amplitude of his evaluation, rather than its profundity, which makes him a significant figure in America's coming of age.

Of the five novels before *Main Street*, only *Our Mr. Wrenn* (1914) and *The Job* (1917) show much evidence of social concern. They gave a tentative enunciation to a theme which was to become important in our literature, although Lewis left its development to others. Both novels explore the concept of the tyranny of the job, the whole business system and the business myth over the individual. *The Job* also touches on two ideas which were to engross Lewis' attention for the rest of his life: feminism, the struggle of the partially emancipated woman for selfhood, her effort to human-

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ize her "existence of loveless routine"; and the shoddy quality of our civilization.

Although these early works are often high-spirited, they do not give any clear indication of the direction their author was to take. In view of the stereotyped criticism of the economy which they contain, Lewis might have been expected to produce increasingly tendentious studies in the manner of the writers of the 1930's. Perhaps the tremendous success of *Main Street* was decisive in setting his course, but it must not be forgotten that he had for some years been meditating such a work, to be entitled *The Village Virus*, and had been collecting examples of stupidity for that purpose. At any rate, he found himself amazingly at home in the broad depiction and sweeping denunciation of a whole way of life. His success encouraged him to use the discursive chronicle as a frame tale for a multitude of sketches of what Mencken called the "Boobus Americanus"; he never really had to channel his thought or subject himself to the discipline of a narrow focus. It may be, as E. M. Forster has said, that he lodged "a piece of a continent in our imagination," but its outlines are vague, its hills and watercourses only approximate, and its geologic strata completely uncharted.

Whatever the deficiencies of *Main Street* as a novel—and it is bound to suffer by the inevitable comparison with its prototype, *Madame Bovary*—it is important as the original trumpeting of Lewis' discontent, as his first gesture of flinging open every window and door and letting the fresh air of the prairie turn smugness and conventionality head over heels. His quarrel with the village is set forth as a challenge in the epigraph:

> Main Street is the climax of civilization. That this Ford car might stand in front of the Bon Ton Store, Hannibal invaded Rome and Erasmus wrote in Oxford cloisters. What Ole Jensen the grocer says to Ezra Stowbody the banker is the new law for London, Prague, and the unprofitable isles of the sea; whatsoever Ezra does not know and sanction, that thing is heresy, worthless for knowing and wicked to consider.
>
> Our railway station is the final aspiration of architecture. Sam Clark's annual hardware turnover is the envy of the four counties which constitute God's Country. In the sensitive art of the Rosebud Movie Palace there is a Message, and humor strictly moral.
>
> Such is our comfortable tradition and sure faith. Would he not betray

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himself an alien cynic who should otherwise portray Main Street, or distress the citizens by speculating whether there may not be other faiths?*

Carol Kennicott, the alien, though no cynic, does indeed distress the citizens of Gopher Prairie. Her faith, like Lewis', is uncertain and ill-defined, but of one thing she is sure: there are other, more gracious ways of feeling and of living. Once we reconcile ourselves to the fact that Carol is not an Emma Bovary—animated by an authentic though minor daemon—and accept her as the convenient mouthpiece for all the discontents the author wishes to discharge, we can see that the village is the real protagonist, and Carol no more than the stimulus which sets off its reactions. It is difficult to work up any concern over her sufferings; it is a matter of indifference at the end whether she returns or stays away. What is important is the exhibition of village life and the judgment passed upon it.

In a long summary passage in the middle of the book, Carol-Lewis topples village complacency with an explosive comment:

> It is an unimaginatively standardized background, a sluggishness of speech and manners, a rigid ruling of the spirit by the desire to appear respectable. It is . . . the contentment of the quiet dead, who are scornful of the living for their restless walking. It is negation canonized as the one positive virtue. It is the prohibition of happiness. It is slavery self-sought and self-defended. It is dullness made God.

In this general atmosphere of drabness and dullness, there are four principal targets. First of all, there is moral and religious inhibition, dominated by a philosophy of "dull safety," turning in frantic reprisal on anyone whose behavior departs from the limited and unimaginative norm. Second, there is thralldom to a crude materialism. The village values knowledge only as it is the visible avenue to money or to social distinction. It divides people into clubs, churches and schools on a basis of income and punishes those who dare to ignore such lines. Third, and most appalling, this mentality is pawing at world dominion, "not satisfied until the entire world also admits that the end and joyous purpose of living is to ride in

*Quotations from *Main Street* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1920) are reprinted by permission of the publisher.

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flivvers, to make advertising-pictures of dollar watches, and in the twilight to sit talking not of love and courage but of the convenience of safety razors," demanding, moreover, that foreigners give up their own heritage so that they may be "ironed into glossy mediocrity."

It is this fourth point, this "glossy mediocrity," which is the climax and epitome of Lewis' grievance. The attitudes he pillories have become institutionalized, and any adventurer of the spirit must combat Polite Society, the Family, the Church, Sound Business, the Party, the Superior White Race—and, when his strength gives out, he must succumb to the Village Virus, which is the deadly distillation of all these.

There are other themes in *Main Street;* that is one of its difficulties: it starts more hares than it can conveniently follow. It is often hard to determine how much of Carol's revolt is against Main Street and how much against her condition as woman. The author is also disposed to seek nobility in the soil, to find among the farmers of the bounteous countryside the greatness and dignity absent from the village, and to speculate as to where the original promise of a pioneer region was lost and we began to incur the risk of "the ancient stale inequalities . . . the tedious maturity of other empires." Certainly all of Lewis' later writing is implicit in the tangled and multitudinous skein of this novel. Once he had described the milieu *in extenso*, he turned to the unlovely seed which it spawned.

Babbitt (1922) shows the pitiful product of a crude and adolescent civilization, but one that is not entirely despicable or completely beyond hope. As we first see the protagonist going through the routine of meaningless and repetitive activity which for him constitutes living, we find him a comic figure. We laugh at his addiction to gadgets, to the cliché in speech and thought; at his tagging his values with dollar signs and sanctifying them with advertising slogans; at the clumsy gregariousness necessary to give him even a faint sense of being. In spite of mitigating touches—such as his unadvantaged loyalty to Paul Riesling—when we begin to look beneath the comic exterior, we find him distasteful, even faintly evil: a portent of the mass man and of the mentality that turns others into mass men or expels them from the community.

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The cruelest of Lewis' darts are reserved for those minor figures, Verg Gunch, Chum Frink, and the rest, whose very names are an affront to the sense of human diginity. Such a figure is Lowell Schmaltz, the monologuist of *The Man Who Knew Coolidge* (1928), the emptiness of whose mind and heart is turned inside out in the six meandering conversations which make up that book. He is a windbag, a boaster, a boor. He is a coward with an underhand streak of cruelty. He has drunk deep of Main Street's class consciousness and cultural chauvinism. His vision of the New World is summed up in his ideals of Service and Practicality. The first consists of selling a fellow something he does not want or need and cannot afford; the latter involves the elimination of those "intangibles" which normally constitute the glory of a civilization.

If *Elmer Gantry* (1927) is a less devastating portrait, it is only because we see the whole man in action over a period of years and not just the fetid essence of his mind. This novel, above all others, was lovingly contrived to shock. It begins, "Elmer Gantry was drunk." It ends with a crashing demonstration of his hypocrisy. Throughout, it is a debunking, of the sort popular in the 1920's, of the claims of a certain type of minister and a certain type of religion to sanctity and godliness. The author is careful to sketch more godly men, true priests, but the novel is focused on the fakery of religion as exhibited in the America of the boom period.

In contrast with such figures, Martin Arrowsmith is a success, even by Lewis' exacting standards. After being subjected to every kind of temptation, every kind of blind alley his vocation affords, Martin strides firmly down the path of righteousness and follows his vision of "serene spaciousness of mind." Though the novel is severely restricted in action to the medical profession, it has wider application and embraces all vocations, all efforts to be a complete human being. Here, institutions, human needs and incapacities, approximate values and delusory ambitions are drawn up in implacable enmity, ready to smite the individual who dares run the gauntlet. Much of the book's popularity is probably founded on the fact that, in a wasteland of abortive human beings, Arrowsmith succeeds —the nature of the Grail which he seeks being less important than the fact that he is a Parsifal.

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Lewis' limitations as a critic of society are well exhibited by these works. Good or bad, his heroes are largely static, being little more than incarnations of qualities of which the author approves or disapproves. Their very excesses discredit the novels as criticisms of society. In our horrified amusement or disgust, we lose sight of the social matrix which forms these human caricatures and find it impossible to believe that they are typical products of that matrix, even though we adopt their names as household words. It is interesting, therefore, to find that *Dodsworth* (1929), in which Lewis succeeds in creating a more credible human being, also comes more nearly to grips with those problems of our society which trouble him.

This novel, more than any other by Lewis, has a symbolic structure. Edith Cortright is an expatriate who has fled the crudity and harshness of existence in her homeland because she lacks courage for the crude but potentially fruitful life on the American continent. Sam Dodsworth, on the other hand, is a vindication of his country's promise. Although his perspective has been limited by years of pursuing money, he is not a Babbitt; he has status in his own mind as a *maker*, a savant; he is not intimidated by the culture of Europe but is able to assimilate and evaluate it without stooping, as his wife does, to sterile imitation. His integrity alienates his wife, whom he is forced to put aside as a childish encumbrance, but his qualities give hope to Edith, who finds that American life can be a richer amalgam than she has dared to dream. Thus we come to the conclusion that the American adventure is to Lewis the bigger for his discovery of Europe, a timely fertilization coming when "we're no longer satisfied with the log cabin and the corn pone."

By 1930, then, the date of the international recognition attested by the Nobel Prize, Lewis was beginning to give closer and more thoughtful scrutiny to the problems with which he was concerned. Main Street had become less localized in his mind, and he was willing to accord somewhat more dignity and promise to its product than some of the earlier portraits had indicated. For example, a few years later he says of Anne Vickers, a latter-day Carol Kennicott, that the small town and its ways would enter into everything she would do in life and that she was fortunate to be related to "the bourgeois colony which, up to 1917, was the only America," and to be alive

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"in the magnificent though appalling moment when the United States began awkwardly to see itself not as an illegitimate child of Europe but as the master of its own proud house."*

As we look back on the novels of his last two decades, however, it seems that Lewis was seeking desperately for a subject adequate to the evaluation he wished to make, and that he failed to find such a subject. His affirmative statements, such as *Work of Art* (1934), are shallow and sentimental; attempts to reach his former high-spirited vein of mockery are forced; and, on those occasions when he does at last take hold of a specific social problem, his habitual diffuseness defeats him. Nonetheless, *It Can't Happen Here* (1935) and *Kingsblood Royal* (1947) are the most interesting works in this last period because they do attempt to come to grips with the most serious social manifestation of our time: the vindictive limitation of human sympathy which produces authoritarianism and racial discrimination.

Kingsblood Royal is decidedly the most bitter of his books, ending with a battle to the death between the Kingsbloods and the forces of bigotry which are determined to drive them out of the neighborhood in which they had been accepted when Neil Kingsblood thought he was a white man. The author runs into two difficulties with this book. First, he makes discussion of a deeply serious social issue depend on a capricious mechanism, that of Neil's sudden change from white man to Negro. Secondly, if such a mechanism is to be employed with any effectiveness, it must be used consistently so that the whole work becomes a comedy of errors with only the edge of bitterness showing. Lacking such treatment, the book becomes the author's most outright social tract and the least characteristic of his works. It bespeaks a patience worn thin, a bitterness of judgment on "the whole damned human race" reminiscent of Mark Twain in *The Mysterious Stranger*. It pulls the reader up short, making him wonder if, in the end, the roistering Lewis had become convinced of the fundamental unregeneracy of man, and had despaired of the future.

A more characteristic work in terms of both technique and atti-

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tude is *It Can't Happen Here*, published twelve years earlier. Reversing Lewis' former strictures, it comes close to veneration of the small town as the focus of democracy and individuality, the only hope of a world increasingly subjugated to the sterile forces of propaganda and mass emotion. Doremus Jessup, the Vermont newspaper editor who is the hero of this novel, is characterized by the author in terms not inapplicable to himself:

> . . . far from being a left-wing radical, he was at most a mild, rather indolent and somewhat sentimental Liberal, who disliked pomposity, the heavy humor of public men, and the itch for notoriety. . . . But for all cruelty and intolerance, and for the contempt of the fortunate for the unfortunate, he had not mere dislike but testy hatred.*

He maintains that, "with scandalous exceptions," democracy in this country has given the ordinary man more dignity than he has ever had elsewhere, but he is not blind to repressive and authoritarian tendencies as manifest in Red scares and Catholic scares, White Supremacy, peonage in the South and wage-slavery in the North.

Not the least of Jessup's antagonism toward the imaginary fascist regime is that, if it is against communism, he has to be for communism, and he doesn't want to be. He has no use for any of the patent solutions, doubting that there will ever be a state of society which will come anywhere near perfection. He comes to realize that the struggle going on in the world is not that of communism against fascism, but of "tolerance against bigotry that was preached equally by Communism and Fascism," and he sees that he must stand by himself, a "Liberal," scorned and abused by all parties for insisting on privacy and the right to think and criticize as he pleases:

> More and more, as I think about history, I am convinced that everything that is worth while in the world has been accomplished by the free, inquiring, critical spirit, and that the preservation of this spirit is more important than any social system whatsoever. But the men of ritual and the men of barbarism are capable of shutting up the men of science and of silencing them forever.

This is the most meaningful statement that Lewis made, and it is even more pertinent today than it was in 1935. Here at last he

*Quotations from *It Can't Happen Here* (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company, 1935) are reprinted by permission of the publisher.

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approached a definition of the social evil which had provoked his attacks in the earlier novels. Here he made the necessary distinction between imperfection of behavior and imperfection of the spirit. Here he recorded the eternal warfare between aspiration and habit.

At long last, Lewis seemed to discern what his countrymen at large must learn if they are to survive and flourish: growth, though organic, is not automatic. There are impeding forces—some within the organism, some within the environment—which must be countered with directive energy, not by simple fiat. It is not enough to mount a pillar and proclaim on high: Be ye no longer Babbitts. There are worse fates than being immured in Main Street, though we must fight on Main Street those germs which multiply to plague in Babylon. When conflicting forces which would harden the heart and mutilate the will bring all the resources of bell, book and terror to subjugate the individual, we must be as resolute against the one as against the other. Tyranny is one and the same, whether it be the mediocrity of the village, the stultifying gregariousness of the herd, the privileged exclusiveness of the institution, the snobbish imitation of the hallowed and esoteric, or a dogmatism whose means are the antithesis of its ends. Perhaps Lewis should have learned this sooner, so that he might have begun where, in fact, his thought came to an end. If that be the case, he has provided inadvertently still another measure of our adolescent shallowness and, as long as we are honest with ourselves, he will be remembered as the image of our salad days.

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Communism and the Indian Election

SAMUEL SCHWARTZ

INDIA, for the first time in her long history, recently enjoyed a national election based upon the principle of universal suffrage regardless of race, religion or sex. The familiar and judicious tenet of J. S. Mill regarding the requisite need for universal education prior to universal suffrage was ignored in India for at least one important reason: universal education is expensive in both money and time. In view of the recency of her change from colonial status to sovereign statehood, it is not surprising that the cost is definitely prohibitive for India. To offset this missing factor and to keep faith with the people, the government blanketed the country by every conceivable means with the "why" and "how" of the election in order to obtain as completely a national expression as possible. So that no one of voting age could be handicapped, the balloting and identifying of parties were reduced to their simplest form. The job was well done, the spirit ran high. Only 1.9 per cent of the large total of 107,578,000 votes cast was declared illegal.

The results of the election received a markedly strange reception in many American newspapers. Strong emphasis was placed on the successes achieved by Communist candidates. That Communists were elected to office in India is, of course, news. But the impression created was very misleading. The reason for this may be one, or any combination, of the following: pique over India's refusal to toe the line on American foreign policy, more than mild consternation whenever a Communist wins an election outside of the Communist sphere of control, or real ignorance of the election and what lay behind the Communist successes.

The outstanding fact of the elections was the overwhelming suc-

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cess of the Congress party. Nevertheless, the fact that the Congress party won came as no surprise to anyone. That the Communist party of India won some seats should not have caused surprise either, because insight into the Communist success provides a stable sense of perspective. After all, in a country like India, little else can be expected at this time. The gravitational tendency toward communism during the past decades in the impoverished world areas is a recognized trend. India is no exception, especially since the close proximity of Red China, the Soviet Union, and the running successes of the Communists in French Indo-China and Malaya lend themselves to effective and virile Communist propaganda. However, the picture of what happened and what promises to happen is reasonably clear and not particularly threatening.

Election techniques were differently employed and designed, based upon the strength of the parties. The Communist party of India, before the election, worked out many alliances with other parties in order to win or make claim to more legislative seats. The Congress party did not have to do this, except in some cases, because its organization was sufficiently large to enter candidates in almost all the election districts. The Communists, on the other hand, formed what, on the surface, appear to be effective alliances: in West Bengal, with the KMPP (Kisan Mazdoor Praja party), the Revolutionary Socialists, the Marxist Forward Bloc, and the Socialist Republicans; in Bombay, with the Workers and Peasants party and the Left Socialist group; in Madhya Pradesh, with the Marxist Forward Bloc, Workers and Peasants party, Bolshevik party, Left Socialists; in Tamilnad, with the Kalazan organization; in Travancore-Cochin, with the Revolutionary Socialist party, Kerala Socialist and Left Socialist groups.

The following are the results of the Communist alliances, as they stand in relation to the successes of the Congress party. Of the total number of 489 elective seats in the important parliamentary body, the House of the People, the Congress party contested 480 seats and won 364 seats; while the Communist party of India and other allied groups contested 70 seats and won 27 seats. Of the total number of 3,283 seats distributed among the legislative state assemblies, the Congress party contested 3,278 seats and won 2,247 seats; while

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the Communist party of India and their allied groups contested 567 seats and won 174 seats. The combined popular vote for the Congress party was 43,470,924, whereas the Communists received 6,259,333 votes. These figures, of course, fail to tell the entire story. But even if there were not more to tell, the mere fact that the Communists only received 5.44 per cent of the popular vote indicates that India is not overrun with Communists or Communist sympathizers.

Another note of importance is that, though the Communists were able, this time, to join forces with other groups in order to defeat the Congress party in the election, it is extremely doubtful that they will enjoy such continued cooperation. On the state or provincial and national level, the alliance with the KMPP, for instance, cannot last for any length of time. The KMPP is a conservative agrarian party established along the lines of Gandhi's economics of decentralized land holdings and cottage industries. These principles are opposed to Communist ideology, and the two parties could only agree on the transitory need for a combined effort to defeat the Congress party. The Revolutionary Socialist party of India is another example. This party considers itself to be a party of Marxism-Leninism. Nevertheless, it believes that support of Russia should not mean a blind toeing of the Communist line. The Peasants and Workers party is closely related to the KMPP in working philosophy, and some members cross party lines with impunity. Perspective is further heightened in regard to Communist victories upon examination of the electoral support realized by other all-India political parties which consistently refused to merge or align themselves with the Communists. These groups received a substantial percentage of the minority votes. The Socialist party of India received 10.23 per cent of the popular votes, the KMPP received 5.26 per cent, the Jana Sangh received 2.98 per cent, the Scheduled Castes 2.20 per cent, while independent candidates received as much as 14.43 per cent.

The responsibility for the Communist party's having won some seats in the elections must, in large measure, be assumed by the Congress party. This responsibility is the result of the organizational history of the Congress party.

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Today, along with other dynamic changes of growth, India is experiencing a great change in her internal politics. The Congress party has the best organized, best financed all-India party in the country. As the party in power for some four years, as the leading party in the struggle for independence, it found it easy to perpetuate its control and win the first national election. However, the political activities before the election, and the results of the election, indicate the growth of new and stable political parties and the decline, in a sense, of the Congress party.

Since its inception in 1885, the Congress party, in one way or another, has struggled against the British. The Party grew quickly, and accepted into its organization all elements willing to fight for independence. Through the inspired leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Patel, Motilal Nehru and his son, Jawaharlal, Maulana Azad, Rajendra Prasad and many others, the Party achieved national sovereignty. Whatever internal struggles there were, and there were many, were always suppressed in the interests of the primary goal—independence. However, now that the burning issue of independence is no longer a binding factor, personal and group interests are beginning to manifest themselves. This was clearly in evidence some months before the election took place. The conflicting groups within the Party began to agitate seriously for control and for recognition. In many cases, when these maneuverings were attended by failure, resignations began to flood the Party organization and even found their way into government councils as responsible functionaries parted with the government and with the Party. New parties sprang up, new leadership whipped up criticism outside the Party and small, provincial parties organized themselves on an all-India basis. The new parties and the reinvigorated older opposition parties accused the Congress party of corruption, maladministration, misguidance; of being Fascist, Communist, tolerant, intolerant and dependent. To these charges, the Congress party answered with a warning to the people to beware of the feudalistic, religious orthodoxy parties which were preaching a communalism that no longer had any place in India. Insisting upon the non-secular nature of the state, the Congress party reaffirmed its own domestic and foreign program but admitted that the needed internal reforms were coming

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slowly, and pleaded guilty to the charges of some prodigality and maladministration. The spoils of party power had, admittedly, fallen into the hands of some who had had little previous training in the responsibilities of office, and who were incapable of effectuating not only a desirable program but a practical one.

It is because of the refusal of the Congress party to stand guard against the personal ambitions and the difficulties of political power, and, more importantly, because of its refusal to recognize the growing inability of unlike groups to work together, that the leftist elements won a part of the election. Prime Minister Nehru has desperately sought, and continues to seek, to work out a program satisfactory to both the rich, conservative Party members and the young and zealous equalitarian reformers. He is in sympathy with the reformers, but he has had to keep peace with those conservatives who are in a position to provide necessary investment capital. Nehru has often been accused of being a good statesman but a poor practical politician. This is probably true unless, in the interest of good statesmanship, he is forced to behave in a manner he ordinarily finds unsuitable to his intellect. His recent behavior toward the Congress party President, Purushottam Tandon, before the elections, is a case in point. Tandon, like the late Sardar Patel, represents the conservative elements within the Party. A conflict of viewpoints over the nature of the Party Working Committee saw Nehru threaten to resign from the Party unless he was given the authority to constitute the membership of the Working Committee in his own way. Tandon was forced out of the presidency, and Nehru became head of the leading national party while engaged in his duties as Prime Minister. Nehru was then successful in attracting some of the recalcitrant rebels back into the Party. But the Party still has within it many elements which work at cross-purposes with each other. Since the Congress party was expected to win the elections, many members who do not adhere to Nehru's political and economic philosophies remained within the fold in order to reap concomitant advantages.

The papers in this country seemed to exult in the news that some Communists had won seats in the election. They pointed to India's "soft" policy against the Communists abroad and predicted that

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India would soon be lost to the Western world. As the results continued to come in, the newspapers switched to something else. But is it a fact that India has been "soft" toward communism? On the international scene, Nehru has sought to heal the breach between conflicting world ideologies. He appears sincerely incapable of responding to the alternative of eventual conflict, and has little faith in the thesis that military rearmament is a proper solution. But this position is not the position taken by Nehru or the Indian government when faced by communism within.

The provincial election results show that, of the three states in which the Congress party failed to capture a majority of the seats, two of the states had outlawed the Communist party of India. These two states are Hyderabad and Travancore-Cochin. According to Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, a former member of Nehru's cabinet who is now active in Madras and is an implacable foe of the Communists, the Communist party of India had received and accepted a directive from the Russian Cominform enjoining it to build up liberation armies in the rural areas. For several years, the Communists have been conducting an almost full-scale rebellion in Telengana (Hyderabad), in Tripura (border state near West Bengal) and elsewhere. In answer to these outbreaks, the states outlawed the Communist party and the central government made no attempt to compel contrary legislation. The disturbances were particularly violent in Telengana. Because this violence continued and the Communists refused to refrain from the use of violence, the state government of Travancore-Cochin felt justified in disregarding two Communist statements calling for an election truce.

Under the Detention Act framed by the late Sardar Patel, practically anyone could be jailed and held without trial. One of the members of the Communist party, A. K. Gopalan, was held without trial by a series of detention orders from December, 1947, to March, 1951. The Madras High Court of Justice declared the Detention Act in contravention of state law. The Calcutta High Court followed suit shortly after and declared the state ban on the Communist party illegal. Then, in February of 1951, Mr. Rajaji passed through the Parliament an amendment to the Detention Act that did little else but set up a cumbersome advisory board mechan-

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ism which provided only a formal semblance of due process. Some Communist leaders were released from jail but were given little time to campaign. It was not an unusal procedure for a Communist to be faced with a general suspension of public speaking privileges as soon as he entered a district. State police have attacked publicly-inspired Communist meetings, smashed printing presses and hounded Communists, though they may have conducted themselves peaceably. Indeed, though the violence was not stopped by the Communists, it is immeasureably difficult to appreciate the amount and origin of provocation. When the East Punjab became governmentally disorganized, for different reasons, and violence broke out, the central government stepped in and restored order. The Congress party certainly could have counseled more effective behavior in the disturbed states through the Party machinery.

The best answer to the Communist propaganda was a program designed to abolish the feudalistic, autocratic rule exercised by the state governments. It was not until December 10, 1951, that any substantial step was taken in the right direction. One hundred landless peasants of the Warangal District in Telengana received twelve-acre holdings under the government's fallow land distribution scheme. There were still 63,000 acres available for similar distribution. It is to be hoped that this beginning step was not an act of mere political expediency. At any rate, Nehru and the Congress party cannot be accused of being "soft" toward Indian Communists.

The Communist party is in sharp conflict with some state governments, but this can be said also of other parties. The Socialist party of India has attacked the Congress party program on many fronts and has accused the Party of dealing dishonestly with the people of India. The KMPP, the Hindu Mahasabha, the Jana Sangh, the Scheduled Castes Federation and others have attacked the very fundamentals of the Congress party platform. In regard to the election itself, the Communist party was again not the only group that protested against alleged unfair and discriminatory practices of local officials under Congress party control.

Whether all these charges are or are not wholly true, the fact remains that the Communist party of India was successful to some extent in three states. In Travancore-Cochin, the Congress party

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won 43 seats in the state assembly, while the United Front of Leftists (which includes the outlawed Communist party) obtained 25 seats out of a total of 108 seats. In Madras, out of a possible 375 seats in the state assembly, the Congress party received 152 seats while the Communist party received 62. In Pepsu, out of a possible 60 seats, the Congress party received 26 and the Communists only 2. In Hyderabad, the Congress party received a majority of 93 seats out of a possible 175, while the People's Democratic Front (containing Communists) received 42 seats. This, then, is supposed to represent a clear and tangible Communist victory. The inaccuracy of this conclusion is made clear on examination of the relative success of other parties in the contest. In Travancore-Cochin, where the Congress party does not have a working majority, the Socialists won 11 seats, while independents and others won 20 seats. In Madras, where the Congress party is safely on a working majority side, the KMPP won 35 seats; state parties, 29; Socialists, 13; independents, 62; and the remainder was scattered among small all-India parties. In Pepsu, where there is no Congress working majority, the Akalis, a provincial group, won 19 seats; independents, 8; and the remaining few seats were distributed among other parties. In Hyderabad, the Congress party has a small working majority while the Socialists have 11 seats; the Scheduled Castes, 5; the Peasants and Workers party, 10; and independents, 14 seats. These figures indicate that the Communist party is not alone in receiving minority support.

It is highly unlikely that the Congress party program is in serious jeopardy. The Communists have been unable to wield any interparty influence in the past. It is true that the Congress party will have some difficulties on certain specific local problems. It is also true that the all-India Congress party mechanism will have trouble trying to impose an integrative plan upon some states. But the Communists will not offer dangerous opposition as a legislative group because they differ so seriously with the other parties on vital aspects of their program and methods of operation.

Still another fact must be kept in mind along with the existing possibility that the Congress party and other non-Communist groups will be unable to form a stable government in three or four states. Modeled after the British parliamentary system, new elec-

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tions must be held if the provincial ministerial chief fails to maintain the confidence of the state assembly. Coupled with this is the additional fact that, since elective offices for state assemblies are only for a two-year period, it is not difficult to foresee a Congress majority or a reduction of Communist influence in Madras, Travancore-Cochin, Hyderabad and Pepsu in the next election.

Then why the Communist success? Prime Minister Nehru commented that the Congress party did not work hard enough in these areas. But if the Prime Minister was alluding to a lack of work in terms of campaigning, then he is overlooking something quite vital. Though it is true that Nehru successfully concentrated his campaign attacks against the communalistic groups, it is also true that of the 25,000 miles covered by air alone by Nehru when he visited all the states except Coorg and Manipur, at least three days were spent in one of the states in which the Congress party lost a working majority—Travancore-Cochin. The opportunities Nehru said his party lost had little to do with campaigning. Neither does the answer to the Communist success lie in the number of registered Communists in India, of which there are reported to be only 30,000 plus sympathetic supporters.

The real answers are to be found, undoubtedly, in the disillusionment with the Congress party administration after independence. The advent of independence was heralded as the arrival of the millennium. Optimism was dampened, however, as the amount of work required to strengthen the country came into sharper focus. Unfortunately, much of the Congress party program was ill-conceived, and executed in an even more deplorable fashion. The middle class, which was hit hardest since it was outside of union organization yet equally vulnerable to higher prices, surely had real grievances and shifted its support to other parties. But the government's failure and, perforce, the Party's failure to provide an effective and immediate land reform program, to provide necessary price ceilings and rationing controls; and the apathy of the central government in regard to state feudalism certainly enhanced Communist propaganda, and account for most of their success.

The election results on the national level show the Communist party as the second strongest party in the country. But to say this

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is to say very little because the Congress party majority is so large that no total combination of votes could even begin to threaten its dominant position. Though returned to power with large majorities at the center and in most of the states, the Congress party now has also a more imposing and vociferous group of opposition parties aligned against it. This is a healthy thing because democracy cannot exist with one-party government; and democracy cannot flourish unless it can be stimulated into seeking the real needs of the people.

What was hoped for by democratically-minded men in the Congress party has to some extent been realized. The unity of the Party was a superficial thing. The breaks and secessions from the Party are healthy manifestations which preclude the somewhat preposterous notion that the Party embraces all political beliefs. Now it can move ahead a bit more rapidly because it is a more compact and coherent party. There will be more rumblings within the Party, especially if it recognizes the writing on the wall for what it means. But India has nothing to fear from communism if she succeeds in completing her land reform program and begins in real earnest to modernize and industrialize so that her people will have a reason to work and live.

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The High-Level Formula of J. P. Marquand

LEO GURKO

On the face of it, J. P. Marquand possesses all the attributes of a great novelist. He has a fine sense of milieu, technical skill to spare, and an acute insight into his main characters. His sense of literary tradition is so persistent that he remains the only important American novelist still at work who writes as though he has profited from the experiences of Fielding, Jane Austen, Thackeray and other classical figures of English fiction. Moreover, he has attracted a large reading audience, and has thus escaped that alienation from the public which has discouraged or embittered so many contemporary writers.

To the talents with which he was by nature endowed, to the blessings of worldly success, he has added a toughness of will, never permitting himself the luxury of happy endings or allowing his characters easy ways out of their dilemmas. They enjoy, in fact, no outs at all. When their stories are over, they continue living with problems no nearer solution than at the start. Marquand appears to be saying that the difficulties of life may be insoluble, but that people manage somehow to get along with them and go on living. This is certainly not a romantic comment or a "popular" one, but it is valid and about as close to everyday reality as literature gets.

Yet among so many virtues, Marquand's novels are almost exactly alike. They deal with a fixed problem, and pass through identical stages in the course of working it out. Marquand's technical skill conceals this fact for a time, creating the illusion of variety and change. But when it becomes plain, we realize that here is the restricting

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element that has kept Marquand—and will probably always keep him—from reaching the level of his great predecessors.

In his seven major novels, Marquand is really talking about the same person all the time. The name changes, sometimes the sex, often the profession; his situation, and most particularly his reactions to it, remain uniform. He is a man who, armed with worldly success and an assured position in society, is nevertheless doubtful of himself, uncertain of his values, and, in the end, never quite reconciled to life. This paradox of material success and spiritual malaise supplies Marquand not only with the main structure of his novels, but also with the persistent irony that gives them their special flavor.

It is this paradox, also, which supplies a clue to his popularity, for it reflects a similar contradiction in the country as a whole. Our growing wealth and power, far from increasing our self-confidence, have been accompanied by growing doubts as to our ability to control our environment. Doubts about our civilization, almost unknown in frontier times and during the early decades of industrial expansion after the Civil War, have never been stronger.

They had begun to be stirred up by the muckrakers in Theodore Roosevelt's time. The great revolt against established morals in the twenties, symbolized by the flapper, the hip flask and the feverishness of the jazz age, aggravated them still further. The cult of romantic individualism, expressed in the novels of Hemingway and Fitzgerald, propagandized by H. L. Mencken, was a violent reaction against the values of a society smugly devoted to the accumulation of wealth. But it was not until the great depression, when our system stopped working and our captains of industry, hitherto enthroned as the founts of all wisdom, turned out to be as bewildered and helpless as ordinary men, that our national self-esteem took its first severe beating.

In the context of these experiences, Marquand produced his first notable novel, *The Late George Apley* (1937), about a man who had everything except a belief that he was living in the right way, and launched his inquiry into a series of similar figures tormented by this same skeptical anxiety. This whole fictional theme, coming as it did at a particular time in our history, at the right time from the novelist's standpoint, took hold of the reading public very deeply

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because it appeared to be dealing with an emotional situation through which the nation as a whole was living.

The second novel, *Wickford Point*, dealt with a man who knew what was wrong with him but couldn't cure himself. The third, *H. M. Pulham, Esquire*, related the story of George Apley all over again in a more complex way. The fourth, *So Little Time*, shifted the scene from Massachusetts to New York, but its uncertain hero was otherwise unchanged. The fifth, *B. F.'s Daughter*, centered about a young woman; her psychological problems, however, were scarcely different from those of her male predecessors. The sixth, *Point of No Return*, reverted to the conditions of the first. The seventh, *Melville Goodwin, U.S.A.*, dealt with a professional soldier outside Marquand's usual range, but it was narrated by a character indistinguishable from the earlier figures. In between, while a war correspondent in the Pacific, Marquand turned out a minor little novel, *Repent In Haste*, narrated by a middle-aged war reporter who wasn't sure of his own outlook and found his experiences too baffling to resolve.

This reiterated accent on doubt acquired its peculiar sharpness from the fact that it prospered in the bosom of wealth and established position. Apley had inherited textile mills; Pulham was an investment counselor; Gray, a banker; Skelton, a highly successful news broadcaster; Calder, a writer with a respectable income; Polly Fulton, the daughter of a millionaire businessman. Money is scarcely ever an issue except in Polly's case, where having so much of it raises certain qualms, or in Bella Brill's, where the craving for more than she needs is a sympton of neurotic greed. Doubt among the poor occasions no surprise; lack of it, in truth, would be astonishing. Doubt among the rich is an unexpected emotion and, to the average (non-rich) reader, perpetually fascinating. Marquand plays upon this fascination with great subtlety and, in the end, communicates to us the not unwelcome idea that everybody, high and low, is in the same boat and shares the same confusions and perplexities.

He places a constant emphasis upon the *ordinary* quality of his characters. He has, indeed, made a virtue of the commonplace, and by so doing, reduced still further the psychological differences between his fictional personages and his flesh-and-blood readers. His

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main figures are forever playing themselves down. Apley is diffident about his business ability, and attributes the success of the Apley Mills to his father and grandfather. Jim Calder, the writer in *Wickford Point*, deprecates his talent as a small commercial thing and makes all too clear that the stories his clever agent sells for him are turned out according to mechanical formulas and bear no resemblance to serious literature. Jeffrey Wilson, who edits other men's plays, suffers from an inferiority complex over his inability to write an original one himself. Polly constantly asserts that she is just like other girls and that her father's millions make absolutely no difference. Charles Gray, working as an assistant cashier in an old New York bank, and Pulham, an investment counselor in Boston after a spell in New York as an advertising man, seek to play down their special individualities (which they distrust) so as to be thought similar to other people of their own class and occupation. This diffidence, this running down of oneself, this consuming modesty, is an occupational disease of the Marquand hero. But it endears him to the reader.

The key to the large audience attracted by Marquand's novels lies here. He, more conspicuously than his contemporaries, has broken down the barriers between fiction and life, and made the living feel that they were seeing themselves in his books: not the dream wishes, the fantasy images of themselves, but the conscious actuality. Every element removed from the probable and routine has been carefully pruned away. Marquand permits himself no exoticism. He does not deal, even remotely, with the bullfights, big-game hunts and virility cults of Hemingway. His civilian characters in war are cautious citizens trying to get along; there is nothing heroic about them, heroism itself being sufficiently out of the ordinary to be regarded with suspicion. Nor is there in Marquand, as in the works of Dos Passos and the sociological novels of Steinbeck, any concern with abstract ideas that have an existence outside the framework of the novel. The closest he gets to politics and economics is a vague antipathy to the New Deal. Jeffrey Wilson expresses this feeling in several speeches in his characteristically qualified way. Tom Brett, the New Dealer in *B. F.'s Daughter*, is satirized throughout, but as much of the satire is directed at his weaknesses as a human being as

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at his partisan association with Roosevelt. The other figures indulge in a great deal of speculation on whether they are doing right or wrong, but little of it is philosophical, and all of it is so firmly wedded to the concrete situation that it seldom approaches general principles. Since abstract theorizing and metaphysical argument are among the most alien forms of thought to the American, the pragmatic cast of Marquand's reflections on larger issues exercises a strong attraction upon his readers.

The combination of these many elements creates a fictional scene vividly like everyday reality. The people on it possess the special excitement that the rich, powerful and wellborn nearly always enjoy in the theater and the novel. Yet Marquand, with all the resources at his command, has brought them down to an almost indistinguishably average level where they and the reader feel, think and act like kinsmen closely bound.

The stages in the Marquand formula are plainly visible in the first major novel, *The Late George Apley*. Told as a memoir by a friend going through Apley's papers after his death, this novel created with one stroke the author's reputation as a serious writer. It also—although this was not clear at the time—molded the fictional groove from which he was not to deviate.

Apley's life falls into three parts. The first is the period of passion and doubt. The second describes the impact of conventional society upon these feelings. The third—with which the novel ends—is the emotional state of uneasy and uncertain acceptance which follows the victory of convention over passion. This pattern, almost classically Hegelian, envelops the lives of Pulham, Calder, Wilson and the rest as completely as it does Apley's.

The Apleys are an old, well established New England family, and George is brought up in the proper way. While young and impressionable, he falls in love with Mary Monahan, a poor Irish girl from the wrong side of Boston. His family violently disapproves, and it is this disapproval which brings his feelings for the girl and his doubt about his conventional upbringing to their climax. The maximum point of tension in the novel is reached when parental pressure and George's private passion come to close grips. It is not a long struggle, and ends with the young man's emphatic defeat.

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Mary Monahan—Irish, Roman Catholic, poor, with no social standing—is driven away by the combined force of the Anglo-Saxon, Protestant, wealthy Apleys with their assured place in society. George, on the listless rebound, marries a girl of his own station, has children, settles into middle-aged respectability, but never succeeds in ridding himself of lingering doubts about whether he has done the right thing. All his money and respectability fail to erase the memory, not of Mary Monahan (she has faded into a dim image), but of his one moment of genuine passion. This he never ceases to regard with longing, the more poignant because its object is irrecoverable.

Except for George, the figures in the novel are vague. They are either official spokesmen for convention like the senior Apleys, or outlined abstractions like Mary Monahan and George's wife. Marquand has a talent for caricature: one remembers the Harvard professor in *Wickford Point* with his snobbish pretensions and the publicly idolized foreign correspondent in *So Little Time* who is really a fool. But his capacity for full-scale characterization is almost entirely limited to his principal figure. This is especially true of *The Late George Apley*. We remember George himself, for his feelings about everything have been seen with minute perceptiveness. The rest of the cast, however, are blurred, drifting out of consciousness and memory almost as they appear.

Just as Marquand's plots are limited to a single, uniformly repeated situation, so his characters boil down to a single, uniformly repeated personage. He varies the surface detail each time with admirable skill, but the variations do not, in the end, conceal the fact that he is bound to a formula, a high-level formula in every sense, but with the rigid limits the word implies.

The second novel, *Wickford Point* (1939), changes the context but not the pattern. Jim Calder is much like George: diffident, self-deprecating, with illusions about his own capacity to master life. Things are forever being done to him. He loses something in each exchange, yet only enough to make living perpetually difficult, never enough to make it unendurable. Bella Brill, the greediest, vainest, most charming of his cousins, makes all sorts of demands upon him to which he ultimately yields, yet he perceives her avarice

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and egotism from the start. The Marquand male is often a shrewd observer of his own situation, though this perception seldom increases his capacity to control it.

With the third novel in his major series, *H. M. Pulham, Esquire* (1941), Marquand advances his inquiry. The story of Harry Pulham is the author's masterpiece, the whole process of a young man reaching toward life, then painfully withdrawing into propriety, given its most exquisite and subtle rendition. Where George Apley is seen at a distance, Pulham is presented at the point-blank range of first-person narration. Brought up in the polite Boston society of the Apleys, educated automatically at Harvard, he is groomed for an assured place in life when, after the First World War, he gets a job in a New York advertising agency and falls in love with an attractive young woman named Marvin Myles. Here, once more, is the classic Marquand situation: will he or won't he do what his heart tells him to do? By this time the script is clear. He doesn't, of course. Boston is too much for him. He gives up Marvin and marries a proper Boston girl with whom he lives rather unhappily, doubting to his last day whether he did the right thing.

The whole network of daily routine and habit, which for most of us has a stronger though less visible effect than the great moments, is studied and exposed in the life of Pulham with an articulation so fine that it makes the story an almost classic statement of the subject. We are informed, never more eloquently, of the decisive effect imposed by the ordinary affairs of the day when repeated over the long span. They muffle Pulham's doubts and anxieties by their constant small distraction while reminding him by their very dullness of the great opportunity he imagines he has missed. In the end, it is they that sustain him, the accumulation of small comforts and responsibilities making life, if not free of ache and the sense of loss, at least endurable.

The core of Marquand's view of the human dilemma—his constant theme and persistent conclusion—is reached in its clearest, most persuasive form with the affairs of Pulham. Ecstasy and freedom, he is saying once again, may not fall to the lot of every man, but even without them, one may still find in the world a certain qualified contentment. Without denying the pain, he does not dis-

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count the pleasure. In their combination lies the sense of immediate reality he communicates to his numerous readers.

With *So Little Time* (1943), the scene shifts to New York. The questing, doubting hero is now Jeffrey Wilson, a play doctor, skillful at editing the dramas of other men but apparently incapable of writing original plays himself. Married conventionally, he has the same kind of wife and marriage as his predecessors. Chafing at a relationship that has become routine, he is ready for a new emotional experience. The author prepares it for him in the person of Mariana Miller, a beautiful and accomplished actress. After a period of protracted wavering, he meets her in California, and their affair begins.

The result is foreordained. After passing through an ecstatic interval, he finds that this kind of life is too emotionally rich, that the hold of his wife and children is too strong to be broken. By way of pulling all the strands of the story together, Marquand has him writing an original play while enjoying the delights offered him by Mariana. When the play turns out to be a failure—and characteristically, he is the first to recognize it as such—he realizes his limitations for the last decisive time. He had best stick to his play doctoring and give up the dazzle of the creative muse. Simultaneously, and for exactly the same reasons, he had best stick to established domesticity and relinquish the dazzle epitomized by Mariana.

As he draws a final curtain over his romantic and rebellious self, he takes hold of his now carefully demarcated world on its own terms and finds it bearable. He goes on living in his settled groove, not without uneasiness, not without occasional irrepressible longings for what he has given up, but recognizing all the while his own limitations with that special modesty which Marquand has virtually copyrighted. The novel closes like the others, with defeat and victory about equally balanced.

The Second World War supplied Marquand with important scenes for *B. F.'s Daughter* (1946), which spins still another variation—this time more technically intricate than usual—on his perpetual theme. The focus shifts between two main characters instead of settling on one, and there is a great deal of shuttling back and forth in time. The two characters, however, are only variations of

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the basic one; and the involved plot, though beautifully wrought, does not alter the essential formula.

Bob Tasmin is Calder, Apley and Pulham come to life again. He loves Polly Fulton, but, when jilted by her, marries a quiet, nice girl with whom he is on exactly the terms Jeffrey Wilson was with Mrs. Wilson. In the Pacific war, he carries out a dangerous mission while hastening to assure us it is nothing at all. The modesty is genuine. He is mortally afraid we will take him for a hero, and heroism is a state of which Marquand is acutely suspicious at this stage. When Tasmin returns, Polly offers herself to him. Having spent a number of years reflecting, with an irony perpetually directed at himself, that one can't have everything, he turns her down gently and returns to his wife and children with a growing willingness to accept a life geared to a lower emotional key.

Polly, the daughter of an overpoweringly rich and aggressive businessman, passes through an analogous process. Marquand allows her to devote pages of interior monologue to assuring us that she has not been spoiled by her father's money or hardened by the flint in his personality. The more she protests, the more we are inclined to disbelieve her, and we are not surprised by her eventual recognition of how much like her father she really is. With this recognition, her life becomes more bearable. She too, like the other figures in the Marquand gallery, realizes that you can't have everything, and, in the end, is not unwilling to take less. The ache of this yielding is confined—though never eliminated—by the discovery of her real self. Even to the earlier characters, this growth of self-knowledge is the reward for giving up the achievement of everything. In this way, too, the Marquand equation of pain and pleasure, balanced and interlocked, is scrupulously reiterated.

This is never more apparent than with the next of his major novels, *Point Of No Return* (1949). Its first hundred pages are among the masterly sequences of Marquand's fiction. Charles Gray works in an old New York bank, living with his wife and children in a fashionable suburb. He has a good job, but an executive vacancy in the rank above is about to be filled and he is one of the two candidates for the position. He must get it, or lose face. The strain of

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the competition pressures him into questioning the values by which he lives. From there, it is only a short step to that wholesale doubting of everything about his life which sooner or later becomes the main preoccupation of the whole line of protagonists from Apley on.

In the end, Gray gets his promotion—a material setback is something the Marquand figure is never asked to endure—but even as it is conferred upon him, he wonders skeptically whether the game is worth the candle. We see him at the end, likable, modest, self-questioning, weaving once again the design of irony amidst prosperity that is the imprimatur of his creator's art.

Not until his most recent novel, *Melville Goodwin, U. S. A.* (1951), does Marquand step outside this established pattern. Goodwin is an army general, brave, efficient and, within his professional orbit, sure of himself—in short, the very opposite of the figures of the earlier novels. Naturally, the civilians in the book look upon him with astonishment, skepticism and awe. Can he really be that simple? The answer, after six hundred pages, is yes. And General Goodwin got that way by submitting to the terrific disciplines of West Point and the regular army, which turned him into a being qualitatively different from civilians. He is an authentic hero, but only within the defined limits of his uniform. When he ventures into civilian life, he is a fish out of water: like everybody else, only more so. Impressive in uniform, he is a drab and ordinary figure in mufti. Even his love affair with the very civilian Dottie Peale threatens to destroy him altogether before he pulls back in time to the coordinated safety of his army career. A hero, yes, but confined by special pressures and only inside a world artificially cut off from most of us. By contrast, the two leading civilian characters, Sid Skelton and Dottie Peale, both rich and attractive, are in Marquand's leading vein. Success does not satisfy them, and they search with only indifferent results for the happiness which remains elusive.

The novel is fascinating to the student of Marquand's career because it represents the author's first attempt to break out of his by now warmed-over theme. It is scarcely an unqualified success, since Goodwin's proportions are too arbitrary and tailor-made. But it suggests that perhaps Marquand is himself aware that his old vein has begun to run dry.

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In an age when heroes are growing fewer and more prosaic, Marquand has produced a succession of characters conspicuously purged of confidence. Products of a time which rejects more than it accepts, which is acutely suspicious of moral and spiritual pretensions, they have carried skepticism to the rank of a major emotion. Moreover, they have directed it as much against themselves as against others, which has reduced their stature still further from the inflated dimensions of fiction to the size of ordinary men.

The extraordinary popular success of Marquand as a novelist lies in his skillful evocation of a focal character suited to the age. He equips him with every material advantage—like the country itself—yet denies him the key to happiness. There is the constant implication that perhaps the key does not exist, and that all one can reasonably do is pursue the next best state. This clearly is not happiness, but a kind of uneasy toleration of life—which most people in the middle of the twentieth century would, more than likely, be glad to settle for.

Marquand may continue occasionally to venture outside the bounds of this one emotional experience. Within its bounds, he has portrayed his single life-size character involved in his single unchanging situation with a subtlety, resourcefulness and narrative power that have established him as one of the solid figures in the literature of our day.

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The Theology of Hitchhiking

CHAD WALSH

Hitchhikers are justified by faith through grace.
They do not work their way but wait their way
To the heavenly city. And the race
Is not always to the thumbs at dawn of day.
Many a thumb, at eventide extended,
Outdistances the prudent morning thumb.
This, in strict justice, cannot be defended,
But drivers deal the law of Kingdom Come.

The camera, the bank account, *Who's Who*
List no merits to claim you for my bed.
Faith rendezvoused with grace and I with you,
And good works followed, just as Luther said.
Here at the table, count them one by one:
Damaris, Madeline, Sarah, Alison.

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The Schizophrenia of Bernard Shaw

ARTHUR H. NETHERCOT

THERE is something heart-warming, yet at the same time ironic and even fantastic, about the saturnalia currently being conducted by the devotees of George Bernard Shaw. The hosannas of the reading public, the jubilates of the critics and the plaudits of the audiences have swelled into a vast diapason with all the stops open and the pedals down, and the literary air is reverberating with the rich strains of magnificats and doxologies which have seldom, if ever, been exceeded in the history of letters.

To most people, it is always a pleasure to see a man who has first been neglected, then reviled, and later pooh-poohed in the intervals of his fame, recover and confute his enemies by bouncing off the ground like Antaeus with regenerated strength just when he seems to have been slammed down the hardest.

During the months preceding his last illness and following his death, G. B. S. put on a spectacular show of this sort—the performance for which he had been carefully and enthusiastically training all his life. The earlier acts had had astonishing variety. The process of Socialist-into-Fabian-into-Communist (tinctured with Fascist); the enticements of totalitarianism and dictatorship; the conflict between democracy and aristocracy, culminating in the vision of the Superman—all took place with such pitiless self-publicity that the public watched the show with the fascination of children attending an old-fashioned three-ring circus. The wonder was that there were not more accidents, that the agile toe did not trip more frequently,

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that the prehensile foot did not lose its grip on the high wire more often, and that the skilled fingers did not drop more of the crystal balls in their juggled evolutions. But the most astounding wonder of all was that the box office held up so well—indeed, that the audience did not long ago desert the performer, not in mere boredom or bewilderment, but with loud and angry shrieks of protest and repugnance. It is difficult to explain how a man openly and proudly holding ideas which were anathema to the vast majority of persons within his own immediate social and political orbits still managed to retain not only the public's attention, but also its affection. But this is only one of the many mysteries surrounding the powers and operations of any potent and picturesque personality. It is perhaps one of the indubitable marks of genius.

For here was a man who set himself against or apart from almost every principle or practice followed by most of those who have taken him to their hearts. Here was a man who was lucky that he lived in England, where there has never been an Un-English Activities Committee. If he had been an American, he would undoubtedly have been pricked on the proscriptive lists of Bertie McCormick, summoned to Washington and investigated by Senator McCarthy and the F.B.I., and, perhaps, sentenced to a jail term by some federal judge. Here was a man who not only admitted to a tremendous admiration for Soviet Russia and Uncle Joe Stalin, but who also, for some time during the twenties, was much impressed by the accomplishments of Benito Mussolini in Fascist Italy. Here was a man who violently assailed the results of a once-admired democracy and openly advocated the virtues of benevolent dictatorship as the only way of making the masses go where he thought they ought to go. Here was a man who was an avowed atheist in his youth, and who only abandoned his atheism for a religion called Creative Evolution, with its attendant dogma called the Life Force, which was almost as little calculated to appease the orthodox clergy and the conventional churchgoer as his earlier atheism had been. Here was a man who advocated equal incomes for all, who preached the extermination of the unfit, and condoned the Russian blood purges.

G. B. S. was one of the most complete "againsters" that the world has ever known. He had no confidence in formal education, either

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lower or higher, and once made an offer to award a prize for the worst-behaved child in the school at Ayot Saint Lawrence. He was against medicine, especially inoculation, vaccination and vivisection. He was anti-smoking and anti-drinking, maintaining that his family, especially his father, had already overpaid the Shaw debt to the tobacco and distilling industries. He was anti-meat and called meat-eating "cannibalism with its heroic dish omitted." Perhaps as a result of his vegetarianism, he was portrayed as anti-sex by Frank Harris, who certainly himself displayed no deficiency in that respect.

As a result of the famous remark that "the one hundred per cent American is ninety-nine per cent idiot," Shaw was regarded by many in this country as anti-American, though he would probably have said the same thing about the one hundred per cent Englishman, Frenchman, Swede or Hottentot, if any of these races had been foolish enough to make similar claims about the perfection of their patriotism. For Shaw was against patriotism.

He was also against politicians, ladies and gentlemen, Philistinism, romanticism and idealism. He had a rather low opinion of science. At one time, he advocated the abolition of Christmas.

Yet, as he grew closer and closer to attaining the age of one hundred, the public cherished him more and more and hugged him closer and closer to its collective bosom. To the public, as to many cartoonists, he became a sort of court jester whose quips and quibbles were anticipated and demanded on all occasions, suitable or not, and were relished with huge amusement. His white whiskers, twinkling eyes and rosy complexion turned him into an Anglo-Irish Kris Kringle, and he amassed a wide reputation as a kindly old soul without a bite left in his teeth, and even as a secret philanthropist who shyly concealed his manifold charities under bushel baskets.

Shaw signed his fifty-three acknowledged plays with their proliferating prefaces, his half dozen novels and several tales, his uncountable pamphlets, reviews and critical works, his *Intelligent Woman's Guide to Socialism and Capitalism* and his *Everybody's Political What's What?* with the truncated name of "Bernard Shaw." He said that he did not like the "George" in his name. But he always referred to himself as "G. B. S." and signed all his famous

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postcards, headed in printing as they were "From Bernard Shaw," with those initials only.

Couldn't he make up his mind? Did he feel that he had a dual personality which he wished to maintain? Did he suffer from a mild case of literary schizophrenia? Which was the more fitting label for the man after all—the G. B. S. which presumably stood for his true, complete self; or the B. S. which stood for the Bernard Shaw that he preferred to show the public? Perhaps there was a "George" in his character, as well as in his name—a "George" that Bernard did his best to keep down.

That egotistical charlatan, Frank Harris, was one of the first to accuse Shaw of thinking one way and writing another—of pulling his punches so that the smack of the glove would sound loud, like a clown's bladder, but the impact could easily be absorbed by any shadow-boxer. Alick West, the Marxist apologist, has recently made the same point more solidly (though he hits low) in his book on Shaw, the thesis of which is summed up in its subtitle, "A Good Man Fallen among Fabians." Blanche Patch, Shaw's faithful but most un-Shavian secretary, has still more recently exposed the many contradictions of her employer in her *Thirty Years with G. B. S.*, summing up her conclusions with "He did have the knack of defying the conventions in principle, and in practice bowing submissively to them." Any real student of Shaw, no matter how great his essential admiration for the master, must admit sorrowfully that there is more than a modicum of truth in such charges.

Whether Shaw wrote his plays in conscious application of his comic theory that unconventional ideas can best be slipped in when people are in a cheerful, happy and relatively uncritical mood; or whether he wrote them as he did, after the financial failure of his first theatrical productions, in order to come—with at least some frequency—to better terms with the box office, the fact remains that he almost never stated his convictions and opinions as clearly and decisively in the plays themselves as he did in his prefaces and his works on politics and economics. Although he maintained that he wrote his plays much as a haranguing shill or barker displays a specimen of his show outside the tent in order to trap the victim into coming inside, the analogy is hardly a fair one. Shaw's views on man and society are,

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after all, not comparable to circus acts and sideshows. They are too important, and often too valid, for that. Why was Shaw, like his own Idealist in *The Quintessence of Ibsenism,* always pulling up the mask between himself and his characters in his plays? And what methods did he use to make his works more palatable to the theater-going public?

There is, for instance, the little trick of tucking away a vital clue of characterization or of interpretation in a stage direction, which is, of course, accessible only to a reader and not to a spectator. The most notorious example of this practice is the author's final comment in what is perhaps his most "beloved" play—*Candida*—as the maternal Candida and her "big baby" of a husband, the popular, well-meaning clergyman, James Mavor Morell, turn and embrace as the rejected young poet Marchbanks "flies out into the night." Here Shaw's stage direction—"But they do not know the secret in the poet's heart"—has the additional advantage of being so enigmatic that even the reader cannot understand it without aid from other Shavian sources, and thus does not lose his illusion about the sweetness, understanding and general desirability of Candida. Yet, in fact, Candida is a Shavian Philistine and Mother Woman with a strong streak of shrewdness, unscrupulousness, materialism and even cruelty in her nature. Her only real interests in life are her husband, her two (unseen) children, her cook, her scrubbing brush, her lamp chimneys and paraffin oil, and her red onions.

No director, no actress whom I have seen, from Katharine Cornell to Cornelia Otis Skinner, has dared—or wanted—to portray Candida to the public as Shaw himself conceived her. Nor, apparently, in spite of his well-known insistence on the verbal integrity of his script, did Shaw ever demand that anyone do so, though there were numerous occasions when he might have. If he had, there might have been hisses and empty seats instead of full houses, happy tears and a general feeling of warmness about the heart as the audience sympathetically followed the shrewd maneuverings of its ideal of womanhood. Shaw himself obviously admired Candida Burgess Morell, but not for the same reasons as the public.

In other ways, too, Shaw let himself become a tacit accomplice in a sort of conspiracy of directors and actors to misrepresent his charac-

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ters and meanings to the public. A bit of interpolated stage business, utterly unprovided for in any stage directions, can go a long way toward changing the meaning of a scene or implying new relationships between the characters. One of the cruxes of *The Devil's Disciple* concerns the mystery of why Dick Dudgeon sacrificed himself in a way so seemingly out of character for one of Shaw's chief diabolonians. Why did Dick let himself be captured in mistake for Parson Anthony Anderson? Of course, the average audience would like to believe that the deed was one of self-sacrifice for love, not knowing, or perhaps forgetting, Shaw's usual contempt for self-sacrifice. Indeed, after one of the reviewers had insisted that what Dick clearly said in denying any affection for Judith was really only a gentlemanly lie to hide the actual state of his feelings and preserve her respectability, Murray Carson, playing the role of Dick, every night thereafter, as Shaw himself described it, "confirmed the critic by stealing behind Judith, and mutely attested his passion by surreptitiously imprinting a heartbroken kiss on a stray lock of her hair whilst he uttered the barren denial." Shaw, it is true, explains that he was in Constantinople at the time and had no knowledge of the sacrilege until it was too late. But the byplay nevertheless became established in the tradition of the part, though Shaw makes it clear, in both the dialogue and the preface, that Dick, to his own initial bewilderment, was simply acting according to the "law of his own nature"; and that this sort of mystic self-sacrifice as a motive for altruistic actions is permissible, even admirable, so long as it is performed out of a genuine inner compulsion and desire and not because of a sense of "duty" or social pressure. Although Dick's renunciation of the opportunity for the love of another man's wife reminds one somewhat of Marchbanks in his realization that this sort of bourgeois domesticity is not for him, the audience, in both cases, is left with the romantic sense of a mildly heartbroken lover and a respectably titillating heroine which it so much enjoys.

Similarly, in *Pygmalion*, Shaw has written his play so that audiences persist in believing that Higgins cannot possibly be such a cold-blooded fish as he really is and that, after all the insults, threats, charges and countercharges are expended, the whole thing will turn out to have been nothing but a lovers' spat with Higgins giving in to

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the Life Force and the Pursuing Woman just as Tanner did in *Man and Superman*. This complete contradiction of Shaw's intention can be easily accomplished by a bit of legerdemain, unspecified in the stage directions, but involving the passage of flowers, fruit or rings just before the final curtain descends, and was so accomplished many times. After Shaw had given up in his attempt to mold Beerbohm Tree into his own conception of Pygmalion Higgins in the original production and had despairingly told the actor to "put the play through in his own way," Tree solved the problem, in his sentimental fashion, by throwing flowers to Eliza with a melting smile after he had carefully and correctly delivered the last speech that Shaw had written for the role. Mrs. Pat Campbell, as Eliza, obligingly cooperated. In fact, when she later revived the play and, as Hesketh Pearson puts it, transformed the professor "into a courteous and adoring worshipper," Shaw himself "attended one performance, laughed, and went to sleep." The moving picture version, enthusiastically applauded by millions, proved to be just as great a perversion, with no protest from him. Yet Shaw provided the printed play with a lengthy narrative epilogue in which he showed in detail not only how Eliza meant every word she finally said about Higgins' impossibility as a husband, but also how she actually married Freddy Hill as she had threatened to do. This epilogue remained unknown to the unsuspecting people who only saw the play or the film.

The use of such an epilogue, or postscript, to give quite a new turn to a play which has already been essentially finished is a fairly common Shavian practice. (In *The Doctor's Dilemma* and *Saint Joan* it is in dramatic, rather than narrative or expository, form. But in both these plays—Shaw's only important works that contain a tragic element—the epilogue serves partly to nullify the impression of the death of a protagonist in the preceding scene.) *Caesar and Cleopatra* is a notable example of how Shaw carefully and skillfully builds up one impression of a character for popular consumption in the play itself and then appends a long series of notes in which he happily and impishly divulges the real truth about the character and motives of his hero. Caesar is the chief fully developed Shavian specimen of the past attempts of the Life Force to develop a Superman.

To judge the character of Caesar as most of the audience sees it in

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the play itself, he is a kindhearted, sympathetic, tolerant, magnanimous, wise and even sentimental individual. Caesar has a sense of humor, even at his own expense; he gets along well with women and children; and he likes to invent and celebrate his birthday whenever an occasion for a party arises. He is a great general and conqueror, but he is also a humble man.

All this, however, as the notes make abundantly clear even if the play has not done so to the ordinary spectator or reader, is only the appearance. A supreme egoism marks Shaw's portrayal, though it is not repugnant since it is mixed with a steady stream of seemingly honest self-criticism. Caesar is a consistent Shavian realist. It is only in the notes that the true explanation of his motives and actions appears. The secret of Caesar's greatness lies in his "nature," his "originality," his "selfishness." Comments Shaw: "Hence, in order to produce an impression of complete disinterestedness and magnanimity, he has only to act with entire selfishness; and this is perhaps the only sense in which a man can be said to be *naturally* great." Shaw's further statement that, since Caesar has "virtue, he has no need for goodness," the average man would dismiss as a perverse and meaningless paradox, for he would not accept Shaw's definition of virtue as living according to "nature," with none of the restrictions of convention. The additional assertion that Caesar "is neither forgiving, frank, nor generous" because he is too great to need to be any of these things would seem to be pure subversiveness. And Shaw, respecting the audience's sensibilities, does not insist on putting his own upsetting diagnosis into the play itself.

But the most tremendous suppression of all occurs in *Man and Superman*, where the whole third act—except for the current sensational success of the First Drama Quartette and for a few sporadic matinees of the Macdona players back in the twenties—disappeared in the stage production. And it was the third act for which Shaw originally wrote the play. In fact, without the third act the play loses its main meaning. All the debate of critics and audiences as to the point of the title, all the speculation (summed up in the self-contradictory puzzlement of Charles Duffin in *The Quintessence of Bernard Shaw)* as to whether the "Superman" is John Tanner, Ann Whitefield or even 'Enry Straker, is futile without the third act. Shorn of

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the third act, the title has no meaning. But until lately almost no one had seen—or apparently read—the third act. Not until the very end of Tanner's and Mendoza's mutual dream in hell is the Superman even mentioned—and the word appears nowhere else in the play.

The person who uses it and explains it, rather inadequately, to the Statue, after Don Juan has left the scene, is the Devil. Though the conception makes some impression on the malleable Statue, it is Ana who really takes it to herself. To her demand, "Tell me: where can I find the Superman?," the Devil replies, "He is not yet created, Señora." The Statue's skeptical comment, "And never will be, probably," does not satisfy Ana, who exclaims, "Not yet created! Then my work is not yet done." Thereupon she crosses herself devoutly, declares, "I believe in the Life to Come," and then cries "to the universe," "A father—a father for the Superman!" With this prophetic demand, she "vanishes into the void." Nothing can be clearer, therefore, than that, without the passage at the end of the third act, the title has no meaning; in fact, without the whole third act, with its exposition of the essence of the Shavian philosophy, the play is emasculated. It is quite a different play. But at least it is a play which a general audience is willing to see.

Obviously, then, there is *no* Superman in *Man and Superman*. As a matter of fact, in spite of Shaw's continuing preoccupation with the theme of the Superman and the Life Force, there is no Superman in any of his plays (his Ancients in *Back to Methuselah* being meticulously labeled only "longlivers") until we come to his almost posthumous *Farfetched Fables*. Here, however, his presentation of the befeathered Raphael as a re-embodied thought vortex, or Superman, who has at last achieved the Shavian ambition of shedding the flesh entirely and becoming pure mind, although intended seriously, is practically a caricature.

The last of the major ways in which Shaw consistently softened up his ideas so that their impact on his audiences would not be too obnoxious appears in his portrayal of his doctrine of force and even violence on the stage. His favorite diabolonian Realists, like Dick Dudgeon and Andrew Undershaft, do not seem at all terrifying or dangerous. The former, judged by his actions in *The Devil's Disciple* as well as by the reports of his past, certainly disappoints the expecta-

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tions aroused by the title, for his devilishness is quite mild, even tepid. Undershaft in *Major Barbara*, although the motto of his munitions firm is "Unashamed," and although the Greek professor, Adolphus Cusins, lavishes all sorts of affectionately diabolical epithets on him, such as "a most infernal old rascal," "Mephistopheles," "Machiavelli," "Dionysos," and "The Prince of Darkness," is represented as an ingratiating anti-Christ and called a "millionaire saint" by Shaw. He is, as the stage direction puts it, the kind of strong man who is outwardly gentle because he has "learnt by experience that his natural grip hurts ordinary people unless he handles them carefully." But he is not afraid to hurt when necessary. And his defense of his "Creed of an Armorer" actually comes pretty close to being a retraction of Shaw's former anti-militarism, as seen in *Arms and the Man* which itself dealt with a serious topic in an ostensibly frivolous fashion. The preface to *Major Barbara*, entitled "First Aid to Critics," confesses in its very title that Shaw had not made the point of his play clear to its audience; it would have been too unpalatable.

The somewhat obscure ending of the farce of ideas, *Androcles and the Lion*, has a similar import. As Major Barbara is finally convinced by her father that physical power and material well-being must come first before their religious mysticism can have any value, so, in the hilarious arm-in-arm waltz of Androcles with Tommy the lion through the Coliseum just before the curtain goes down, Shaw implies that the proper combination for the future is that of the strength and force of the lion with the love and understanding of the Christian slave. "Whilst we stand together," says Androcles to his refound leonine friend, "no cage for you: no slavery for me." From this point of view, the lion and the giant armorer Ferrovius represent the same force, since Shaw approves of the former's revulsion from his earlier turn-the-other-cheek pacifism and, in the preface, rejects most of the Beatitudes, especially "Blessed are the meek," as falsifying Christ's real doctrine and character.

Although in Shaw's various "Judgment Day" plays—*Heartbreak House*, *The Inca of Perusalem*, *The Simpleton of the Unexpected Isles*, *Back to Methuselah* and *Geneva*—or in the prefaces to *Androcles* and *Getting Married*, violent means are often used to accomplish what is essentially an intellectual end, these means are generally

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made to seem merely symbolic or relatively painless and even comical.

In *Heartbreak House,* written during the First World War and produced shortly after it, the elimination of some of the undesirable and unfit portions of society is accomplished symbolically, and accomplished off-stage, by the dropping of some surprisingly selective bombs which fall on the house of the poor but invisible clergyman, representing the church; and kill the "two burglars"—Mangan, representing capitalism and big business in politics, and Dunn, representing the more direct variety of robbery and blackmail. One wonders, however, whether, if the bombers return the next night, as Ellie and the two Hushabyes pray they will, the bombs will be quite as selective as they were the first time; at any rate, one knows they will operate symbolically and off-stage.

In *Geneva,* the dictators as well as the spectators at the trial are frightened into the revelation of their true characters by the erroneous radio announcement that the earth is jumping to a wider orbit and that, because of the new ice age, life as we know it will soon be impossible; thus, as Ernest Battler puts it, room will be made for "the new race of iceproof men who will follow us." But in *The Simpleton,* the method of elimination is the easiest and least painful of all. After the Angel of the Day of Judgment drops down on the Unexpected Isles, the news begins to come in of the sudden and extraordinary disappearances of the most respected citizens throughout the world: only two members of the Stock Exchange remain; only fourteen members of Commons are to be found, none of Cabinet rank; only the Dean is left at an intercession service at Westminster Abbey; and, at the Royal Institution, as Sir Ruthless Bonehead, Egregious Professor of Mechanistic Biology to the Rockefeller Foundation, opens his mouth to address a crowded auditorium on "Whither have they gone?" he vanishes before he can utter a word. (Shaw, of course, was a Lamarckian vitalist, not a Darwinian mechanist, in his views on biological evolution.)

The preceding ways of achieving human liquidation are handled in a manner which would be offensive to no one. In fact, the audience hardly realizes what is happening, so skillfully has Shaw covered up the essential import of his situations. But that he is actually

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terribly in earnest in advocating such a policy of extermination is inescapable. Here, for example, is the way in which he begins his preface to *On the Rocks:* "In this play a reference is made by a Chief of Police to the political necessity for killing people: a necessity so distressing to the statesman and so terrifying to the common citizen that nobody except myself (as far as I know) has ventured to examine it directly on its own merits, although every Government is obliged to practise it on a scale varying from the execution of a single murderer to the slaughter of millions of quite innocent persons. . . . Extermination must be put on a scientific basis if it is ever to be carried out humanely and apologetically as well as thoroughly." The remainder of the discussion examines the problem of "Killing as a Political Function," and concludes that, although the killing must never be done cruelly or with any pleasure or malice on the part of the executioner, nor ever on a purely racial or private basis, there remains an "essential justification for extermination, which is always incorrigible social incompatibility and nothing else." Here the totalitarian Shaw appears in his most unpleasant aspect, hurling Jovian thunderbolts about him and pontificating, "The only country which has yet awakened to this extension of social responsibility is Russia," and defending the bloody activities of the Cheka and the Ogpu, because the organization "had no interest in liquidating anybody who could be publicly useful, all its interests being in the opposite direction."

It is almost inexplicably strange, then, in view of Shaw's admiration for Soviet Russia and its leaders, that nowhere has he given us a full-length dramatic portrait of a model Communist, or even a model Socialist, in action. The Socialists in *Man and Superman,* from the squabbling factions among the brigands in the hell scene to the excitable parlor rebel Tanner, are presented satirically or comically. The Reverend James Mavor Morell, the goodhearted windbag in *Candida,* a Christian Socialist as well as a member of the Guild of St. Matthew, is certainly no heroic leader of the advanced guard. Moreover, Shaw always lampoons his democrats and Liberals as contemptuously as he does his Conservatives; and the Laborites in *On the Rocks* fare little better. Sir Arthur Chavender, the prime minister in the latter play, is a convert to Marxism, but he proves

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utterly ineffective in managing the government. Alderman Blee, of the Labor deputation, hasn't even read Marx, but bases his knowledge on hearsay. Viscount Barking, just out of Oxford, is the loudest, wildest and Reddest talker of the lot, but turns soft when he falls in love with Sir Arthur's daughter. His development is much like that of Junius Smith in *Buoyant Billions*, who starts out as a wild-eyed "world-betterer"—which he describes as the profession of Marx, Lenin, Stalin, Ruskin, Plato, Confucius, Gautama, Mahomet, Jesus, Luther and William Morris—but surrenders his reformatory zeal to the Life Force when he falls in love with Clementina Alexandra Buoyant, the eccentric heiress to the Buoyant billions.

In fact, there are only two Marxian disciples for whom Shaw has anything like a good word in his plays. His favorite is Old Hipney in *On the Rocks*, on the surface a modest, unassuming, friendly old chap, but, underneath his pretended disillusion, a "revolutionary Socialist" who really means business. But Hipney-Shaw, like the remaining Marxist, the Commissar in *Geneva*, is only a secondary character, and not a protagonist. And Commissar Posky, though he is made the sole spokesman for the Soviets and usually ruins the arguments of the representatives of the West without any trouble, is himself punctured when the Secretary of the League of Nations accuses him of defection from the Marxian gospel because his government "has declared for Socialism in a single country," and the Judge of the World Court points out that the applied politics of Russia are fifty years behind her political and social philosophies.

It is noteworthy that when, in *Geneva*, Shaw calls the dictators of Europe before the bar of the World Court, the greatest dictator of them all is not summoned. Joseph Stalin is merely represented by the Commissar. Could it be that Bernard Shaw tacitly but carefully avoided a situation in which—if he had been thoroughly true to his principles, if he had allowed himself to speak as the real G.B.S. would have liked—he would have had to let Stalin express his Communist doctrines with profound and shocking seriousness? Instead, consciously or unconsciously, Shaw subjected those revolutionary views to the softening and comicalizing process which he applied to most of his deeply felt and otherwise sincere opinions when offered to an audience in play form.

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Trees

ERIC WILSON BARKER

Most equable of loves
that blow not hot nor cold
nor whine their claims of loving like the flesh,
but armored in their undemanding bark
dig deep, grow tall,
restore like clouds beyond their own estate
the cool and temperate climate of the heart.

Days when I cannot reach
nor listen to their leaves,
into the mind's full view with wind they come,
eclipsing leisurely all waking shades,
as prodigal of shadow as the clouds,
but spread in moods more stable on the grass
of quieter fields than even clouds possess.

✪ ERIC W. BARKER's poetry has appeared in *Harper's*, *Yale Review*, *The Atlantic Monthly* and *The Beloit Poetry Journal*. His first book of verse, *The Planetary Heart*, was published in 1942.

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Suck-Egg Mule

SIDNEY ALEXANDER

THESE DAYS, the shadow of the mushroom-cloud hangs even over Taos, New Mexico. For this artists' community, which has long been a place where Americans could expatriate themselves without leaving the United States, is only some fifty miles from the atomic center of Los Alamos. And though fifty miles was once a sufficient cushion of distance (think of Thoreau's cosmic isolation a few miles outside of Concord), now the Taoseños anxiously murmur: "Why, we're even worse off than you New Yorkers! A near miss might hit *us!*"

Quite aside from the normal indisposition to be disintegrated which he shares with the rest of the world, the Taoseño resents this threat-provoking proximity of Los Alamos. He resents it personally. He feel that it is an intrusion into his Nirvana.

Since the turn of the century, and especially after the D. H. Lawrence myth had cast its glamor over the place, Taos has been a refuge for artists and writers who long for Quiet Periods, Eternity and Timelessness. Now the Quiet Periods sound like a boiler factory and the clock ticks ominously. Things are changing. The young Indian boys came back from the Army with their long braids cut, but they refuse to cut out the seats of their good dungarees and wrap a blanket around the hiatus. They fight with the old men of the council about installing electric light in the ancient pueblo. They leave and become mechanics and marry white girls. A few years ago, the conflict between the veterans and the council became so bitter that the Indian Affairs Office sent some officials as peacemakers, but the officials never even got to the pueblo. A line of

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stubborn old men blocked the road. No outsiders were going to settle their family battles.

The conflict in the pueblo is symptomatic of a whole series of conflicts that lurk beneath the peaceful sunbaked surface of this lovely little town. The artists are split into conservatives and moderns, old-timers and newcomers. The white community as a whole is divided into so-called Anglos and Spanish-Americans; and between these two groups there are correct, but hardly intimate, relations. After a week in Taos, one begins to sense crosscurrents that aren't mentioned in the travel folders.

As might be expected, most of the artists are emotionally on the side of kerosene lamps against electricity (though they have electricity in their own homes), and long braids against GI cuts. For the sixty-odd painters who are permanent residents were attracted to Taos primarily because it offered a quaint or primitive backdrop for their own soul-searching. Almost all of them are refugees—refugees from the hectic cities of the East, or from the Puritanical restraints of New England, or from the weary sophistication of Europe. In practically every case, the primary motive that brought them here was flight.

That wasn't true of the founders of the art colony. The handful of painters who had stumbled upon this frontier town in the late nineties were probably less snarled up in psychic coils. They stayed in Taos because it was cheap, picturesque, a good place to work and play. And, ironically, those artists who were physically more isolated in the pre-Lorenzian days were, as practicing painters, less isolated. Generations of Americans grew up with the image of the Indian impressed upon them by Irving Couse's Santa Fe calendars, or schoolroom reproductions of the work of Oscar E. Berninghaus or J. H. Sharp. Some of these old-timers are still around—patient and happy men who paint with sweet directness and simplicity their representations of Indian ceremonial dances, Spanish missions or golden aspens.

But the middle and younger generation of artists—those who came in the thirties and forties—are less fortunate than the old men. They lack their assurance and they certainly lack their money. They are bedeviled by all the competing art styles that jangle in the mod-

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ern consciousness. Each golden October the conservatives still puff up the Sacred Mountain to paint the aspens in bloom, while the radicals stay below and chuckle. But during the summer tourist invasion, the "aspen school" has its time of chuckling. Texas oil millionaires on the hunt for Culture pay fabulous prices for a golden aspen, accurate to the last vein of the last leaf, but they buy very few works in the modern idiom.

Indeed, one's first impression of the art produced in Taos is that entirely too much of it falls into a characterless middle ground between the academic and the avant-garde. Of course, among a hundred artists (including the fly-by-nights), one is bound to find everything from literal mirror-images to nonobjective scribbling. As everywhere else, the work varies from good to bad, but the wholesale lot consists of an overabundance of professional mediocrity—that is, schooled and skilled craftsmen who have very little to say.

The trouble, of course, with all these artists' colonies—Taos, Carmel, Provincetown—is that they tend to become self-indulgent. There is too much gazing in the mirror, too much inbreeding. One might argue—Why shouldn't artists cluster together as do the glassworkers of Murano or the furworkers of New York? But artists are not artisans: between them lies the magic gap. Artists who spend most of their time with other artists run the risk of creative incest: their work thins out, becomes derivative, lacks the individual contour.

The famous schools of Paris, now sometimes lumped together as *the* School of Paris, might be adduced as an argument in favor of fruitful clustering. But Paris has always been an exchange place of ideas. Three poets have dinner together, and next morning there is a new manifesto. Collective artistic thought and activity have traditionally run strong there. Taos, on the contrary, consists of a group of individualists—individualists who just happen to be living together. They do not share ideas so much as compete as free entrepreneurs in an open market. There is no School of Taos.

Yet certain shared qualities, however much filtered through the various personalities, do recur. These are the qualities of the stupendous landscape. Set on a seven thousand foot desert plateau, silvery-yellow with sagebrush, punctuated by the dark green of piñon

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scrub, there is an almost lunar quality here—a spinal, skeletal, harsh reduction to essentials. The Southwest generally is awesome, sometimes frightening, seldom ingratiating. The dry crystal-clear atmosphere makes for hard shadows and astringent color; the sharply-defined edges of adobes against porcelain-blue skies, the masses of light and shade lend themselves to stylized and even abstract treatment. In varying degrees, the austerity of the land makes itself felt in the work of Taos artists of all schools. Among the old-timers you will see it in the bold brushwork of Blumenschein; among the more modern painters you will see it in the striving-for-essentials bony violence of Howard Cook, in Ribak's glum moodiness, in Barbara Latham's dry-brush studies of dead wood, in Bistram's abstractions. The austerity is also manifest in the work of famous part-time Taoseños like John Marin, Georgia O'Keeffe and Marsden Hartley.

Filtered among the brushmen are a few writers, though most of these are to be found down at Santa Fe. Editor of the bi-lingual weekly, *El Crepuscolo*, is Frank Waters, a tall, slow-speaking, sandy-haired Coloradoan, a novelist and authoritative student of Pueblo Indian folkways. His latest book, *Masked Gods*, a study of Indian ritualism, has aroused the antagonistic but respectful attention of professional anthropologists. Waters lived on a reservation as a boy, and probably knows the Indians better than anyone else in Taos. That is, he knows them well enough to tell you that you can never really get to know them at all. "They're very friendly . . . up to a certain point. Then they just become impenetrable." One had the vision of them disappearing into a mental *kiva*—the underground ritual chamber into which no white man may ever enter.

Waters' outdoorness is genuine, just as he is one of the few genuine Westerners in the Anglo community. The owner of *El Crepuscolo* is a Boston Cabot; and in poking around the numerous art galleries, the Harwood Foundation, the gift shoppes, one is likely to meet everything from Hungarians in atavistic flight to New England orientalists, retired schoolmarms ajingle with Navajo bracelets, and quaint ladies dreadfully concerned with safeguarding the Indian way of life.

The literary exponents of heartiness are also very much in evi-

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dence—poets in blue denims who put out "little" magazines with spit-in-the-cuspidor titles like *Suck-Egg Mule*. Out West, arty communities either become very precious or indulge in that self-conscious hair-on-the-chest heartiness that is only another kind of preciousness.

The "expatriate" quality of the artists and writers is characteristic of the Anglo community as a whole. The artists comprise roughly one-third of this group. Eighty-five percent of Taoseños, or about twelve hundred, are Americans of Spanish descent, as isolated from the little Bohemia in their midst as are the Portuguese fishermen of Cape Cod from the Provincetown dabblers.

A mile outside of town, the thousand or so Indians live their own aloof lives in ancient patterns of ritual. Neither the veterans' revolt nor the fact that their multi-tiered pueblo has become a tourists' goldfish bowl has fundamentally altered the Indian way of life. In silent twos and threes, the men come to town wrapped up to the gleaming eyes in dirty baby blue or pink cotton blankets. It is somehow depressing to see Indians buying "Indian" blankets in a chain department store. All day long the men stand around under the wooden arcades of the Plaza, seldom speaking even to each other, their obsidian eyes glistening above the wrapped blankets, while their women waddle splay-footedly in broad-topped white doeskin boots from J. C. Penny's to the Supermarket.

Most of the Indians are farmers; some do menial work around town (the old-time artists each had his favorite model who also served as gardener, cook and general man-servant, but few of the moderns follow this practice). The Indians are cordial and friendly —and utterly remote. According to Waters, they dislike the Spanish (and have historical justification) and feel amiably superior to the Anglos. The latter are in the peculiar position of being (in their own country) permanent guests in an alien, fundamentally Spanish-Indian, culture. The Anglos are the richest element, to be sure, richer than their hosts, and the United States at large is theirs. But here they are a minority—not an oppressed minority, perhaps, only because they are minority-conscious enough to keep their prejudices to themselves. "If you're intolerant, you just can't live in Taos," said a hotel keeper.

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Yet now and then one hears the unconscious chauvinism of the Anglos referring to themselves alone as the "Whites." A few, not many, are careless enough to refer to the Spanish-Americans as Mexicans—a term which the Spanish-speaking population resents. Historically, the Spanish-speaking people here were under Mexican sovereignty for only twenty years of their long history. I was told that the recent influx of Southerners into New Mexico has introduced some prejudice into a region that is really noteworthy for its ability to mix an amiable cocktail out of varied ethnic ingredients. In Los Alamos, several barber shops refused to serve Negroes employed on the project; the row spread to Santa Fe; Oliver La Farge and other notables took up the cudgels, and the barber shops recanted.

Like the three intersecting rings of the beer ad, the Anglos, Spanish and Indians cross only small segments of their separate communities. There are no imposed social barriers, but each group keeps pretty much to itself. If linguistic ability is a sign of culture, then the Indians are justified in feeling superior to their "less primitive" neighbors. Most of the Indians speak three languages; the Spanish, two; but few Anglos—even those who have resided in Taos for twenty years—have learned Spanish or Tiwa. In the municipal school, the children must speak English, but as soon as they get out into the street, they revert to their mother tongue. The Superintendent of Schools and most of the faculty are of Spanish descent. Yet at a Christmas concert presented by the school children, I heard folk songs and carols of French, German, American Southern, and even Polish and Latin origin—but not a single song in the Spanish tradition. When I questioned the Superintendent about this peculiar omission in a concert given by and for an overwhelmingly Spanish-speaking student body, he replied with an embarrassed smile: "Well, they sang *Adeste Fidelis,* didn't they? That's a Spanish song . . . or *practically* one. They always sing it in Spanish homes."

As one might expect, in so exotic a setting "characters" abound like sagebrush. The coffee shop of the La Fonda Hotel is the Café du Dôme of this miniature Left Bank. Here, almost any afternoon, you will meet resident and itinerant artists and writers of a dozen different nationalities. Here will be Leon Gaspard playing chess with his crony, a retired Texan, who also paints. Gaspard is a Russian

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who studied in Paris and later fled the Bolsheviks in a long trek across Siberia. He lives in a fantastic rose-colored adobe mansion with moorish arched windows; and, in his twenty-five years at Taos, has utterly ignored the life around him, painting instead opulent impressionistic memories of his itinerant youth—Siberian forests, snow on the onion-domed churches of Moscow, the ghetto of Vitebsk. These pictures fetch fancy prices from visiting oilmen, but Gaspard really isn't interested in selling. He has an independent income and paints for his own amusement.

Most glittering of the galaxy of "characters" is the fabulous Mabel Dodge Luhan. Her career has been widely chronicled—by herself and others: her villa in Florence, her literary salon in New York, her four marriages culminating in her espousal, almost thirty years ago, of the Taos Indian, Anthony Luhan. Mrs. Luhan and Tony are the acknowledged social arbiters of Taos, Mabel presiding as benefactress, tireless propagandist for the Indians, a scolding and sometimes mystical guide to the perplexed, and lodestar of celebrated visitors.

Mrs. Luhan has written how she "willed" the visit of D. H. Lawrence to Taos in 1922. The following year, Lawrence and his German-born wife, Frieda, returned again, this time accompanied by a British painter and noblewoman, the Honorable Dorothy Brett. These three ladies, getting on in years now, are still very much in evidence—forming a kind of triptych of adoration around the shrine of Saint Lorenzo.

Brett—she prefers that blunt title—is a fascinating example of the Englishman—or woman—in perpetual rebellion, whom one finds in the most outlandish quarters of the globe. From Shelley on down, the foggy isles have erupted these rebels—usually into sunnier climes; and Brett, in her pony-skin boots and her overcoat fashioned somehow out of a Navajo blanket, living alone in the desert four miles out of Taos, is part of a great tradition.

When my wife and I called, she was busily gluing tiny glass beads onto the wings of a squadron of flying angels. Also fixed into the wings were hairlike strands of copper wire like veins of leaves. One thought of the naïveté and childlike craftsman's joy of Italian primitives with their heavy halos and gilt suns in high relief. Around

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the studio walls were hung mystical interpretations of Indian dances, echelons of airplanes in weird patterns of flight—forming letters and roses in the air like the angels in the *Paradiso*—and a series of luminescent heads of Leopold Stokowski.

Here Brett lives alone, poor, but painting all the time, and observing the world with a curious mixture of childlike wonder and adult concern. She was the only person, among all the artists of Taos with whom I spoke, who seemed to be well informed about world events. Most of the others shy away from politics or war talk as from a plague. But all evening, as Brett meticulously glues the colored glass beads to her angels' wings, she listens to broadcasts from all over the world on her high-powered Hallicrafter.

Brett's clipped British diction and flamboyant Navajo blanket-coat, her glass-beaded angels and her Dantesque airplanes are no more incongruous than the mélange of Christian and pre-Christian elements one witnesses in the religious life at the pueblo. During the Vesper dance on Christmas Eve, for example, the image of the Virgin is borne about the dusty plaza. This Christian processional, however, is headed by a shuffling group of blanket-huddled anonymous old Indians wailing, to the monotonous thump-thump-thump of a drum, their own pre-Columbian chants to their own Great Spirit. Meanwhile, all around the dark plaza and even on the tiers of the ancient pueblo, great fires of pitch pine are flaming; and the *Yoho eeyai! Yoho eeyai!* of the old men is punctuated by sharp cracks of rifles fired at the moon by drunken young Indians in Western dress. Trailing the Virgin, a group of ecstatic Spanish-Americans are chanting lauds in Latin, while alongside the procession, but not a part of it, walks the Anglo priest, strangely out of everything.

Watching this incomplete fusion of diverse elements, one feels that here is a perfect symbol of Taos—and perhaps of the entire modern spirit.

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Searching for a Freedom

HAL O'FLAHERTY

DURING THE PAST WINTER, I was assigned by the Institute of Current World Affairs to visit Europe to inquire into the status of the press; and especially to discuss with editors, correspondents, educators and lawyers their attitudes toward freedom of information—the right of the individual to be honestly informed and to inform others by the written or spoken word.

My mission left me with the discouraging conviction that continental Europe had lost its immediate chance to have a free press such as exists in the United States and Great Britain; that the drift is toward more governmental control of information and a widening tyranny over the minds of men; that, unless editors, writers and the public resist the encroachment of government, other freedoms will be dissipated along with that of the press.

The causes of this retrogression, it seems to me, are traceable to the war and to the totalitarian regimes then set up in Middle Europe. Masses of the population came to accept the restrictive processes of all-pervading government. So many years had been spent under various censorships and controls that these ceased to be felt as an imposition, and were instead accepted as necessary to the security of the state.

From Scandinavia south to Spain and Portugal, I found a continuing effort on the part of governments to curb the press, to exercise an outright control over radio communication, and to withhold information which might inflame public opinion or discredit the party in power. Not satisfied with the traditional constitutional acts guaranteeing freedom of the press, plus the usual laws and court decisions regarding libelous or defamatory matter, at least

✪ Forty-two years of newspaper work, of which thirty-three were spent in the service of the *Chicago Daily News* as a foreign correspondent, foreign editor and managing editor, were behind HAL O'FLAHERTY when he undertook the inquiry of which he writes in this article. He was a correspondent in France in World War I, and in New Guinea and the Central Pacific in World War II.

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three governments have enacted or are preparing to enact restrictive measures defining freedom of the press and setting up a code for the regulation of the press.

Sweden, one of the most enlightened countries, was the first to adopt a lengthy constitutional act to replace the simple brief paragraph in its Constitution of 1810 which guaranteed the freedom of the press. Unquestionably, the new law, which went into effect in 1949, is liberal in character and intention, but its effect is both permissive and restrictive. It states specifically who may express his views in print, and how he may secure permission to publish from the national and local authorities. It lays down a complete set of rules for publication, along with fines and penalties for infraction of the regulations.

How can an editor be considered free when he is prohibited by law from publishing many things that obviously would be considered news of the widest public interest? Yet, in the Swedish law, specific items are referred to as libel of various persons and institutions which, in reality, might reasonably be acts of corruption that only a courageous newspaper could bring to public attention. The list of matters not to be published includes libel of the king, libel of an officer of the Crown, an affront to the flag or the shield of a foreign power or to any symbol of its sovereignty. Also unpublishable are incitements to criminal acts, dissemination of false rumors intended to endanger the safety of the kingdom, threats or libels against groups of people because of their origin or religion, actions offensive to decency, and, finally, defamation of a private person by accusing him of criminal acts detrimental to his honor, his good name as a citizen, or his occupation or trade.

Laws against the publication of such matters have existed since the birth of printing. Every nation has them, and some, such as the British libel laws, are extremely severe. Some American states—Texas, for example—have stricter laws against defamation than those enumerated by the Swedish lawmakers.

The difference lies in the origin of the laws and their effects upon a basic freedom. Those of England do not in any way impede the right of an Englishman to go into the business of publishing, even though his prime intention be to attack the government or to argue

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for a new way of life. When made a part of the constitution and bolstered with a fixed procedure requiring government license and supervision, however, these laws do become a threat to the freedom of the press. They imply the right of the government to permit or deny individuals the right to print their views.

One of the most disturbing sections of the Swedish law is its definition of a public document which is accompanied by a detailed statement on how such a document can be held secret. Although the law also describes how an editor or a citizen can apply for the right to inspect a public document, the procedure is so complicated that few would undertake it. On the other hand, any official can, by simply attaching a note to a public document, file it away and hold its contents secret until he or his superiors decide that it can be made public.

At present, Norway is considering the adoption of a constitutional act similar to that of Sweden, and here again, I found an insistence upon a more precise code governing the press. This demand undoubtedly has its origins in the occupation of Norway by Hitler's armies. At that time, Nazi officers took over Norwegian newspapers and converted them into the most despicable organs of deceptive propaganda. Because their favorite newspapers looked the same, the people accepted them as honest purveyors of news. Only when the underground forces revealed that German officers were forcing Norwegian editors to print certain editorials were the readers convinced that both news columns and editorials were full of misrepresentation.

Fear of propoganda in the form of news underlies the present move toward a constitutional change in Norway, although the postwar press in that country measures up to the best in the free world. Somehow, the belief has grown that governments should be favored with a more amenable press, and that criticism of persons and policies would be more disciplined if subject to new controls.

Even in Germany, the memory of what happened under the dictatorships has obviously faded with the years. The Bonn government of Western Germany has been trying to set up a code for the press, and recently drew up the first draft of such a law. One article provided that the press may not damage the reputation of the

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Federal Republic and its peaceful, democratic constitutional order, nor disturb peaceful international relations. At the same time, the law as drafted acknowledged the task of the press to include objective criticism of malpractices, the removal of which is in the public interest. When German editors who saw in the proposed code a reversion to Nazi thought protested the impossibility of criticizing malpractice without damaging the reputation of some government department, the Bonn leaders retreated, saying the law was only in the "discussion" stage.

For the moment, efforts to curb the press are in abeyance in Western Germany; but a few months hence, the offending code will be put forward again. Opposition in the present instance came from editors and journalists who had been well tutored in the defense of freedom. Many were brought to the United States for that purpose, and have come to think of the press as the watchdog of government.

In France, the National Assembly has engaged in numerous debates over a code for the press. Countless projects affecting the freedom of the press have been proposed. Some would limit access to public documents; others seek to prevent the sale of editorial space or to prohibit certain persons, such as news-vending agencies, from ownership of newspapers. Like his counterpart elsewhere in the world, the French statesman dreams of the day when he can be assured of a respectful, a cautious and a docile press. That is the goal of the codemakers. So far, no agreement has been reached, but the struggle proceeds. Non-Communist editors react violently against such a code; the Communists would welcome it.

Another phase of Europe's drift toward dependence upon government evidences itself in the growth of a partisan press consisting of newspapers and periodicals owned and operated by political parties. Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, West Germany and France abound in partisan publications.

With the ending of World War II, a great opportunity arose for the development of a new and better French press. Many French journalists returned from exile, determined to found newspapers free of the evils of the past. They desired an honest press purged of subsidies and strong enough to resist the practice of selling editorial space. Their hopes have not been fully realized.

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After the German occupation forces withdrew, the French government confiscated all printing plants of prewar newspapers. A board was appointed to allot these plants to individuals financially able to operate a publication. Few people, however, were willing to run the risk of loss, and, for reasons sometimes political, the plants were then turned over to editors connected with the political parties. An unattached, independent editor is still a rarity in France.

One question arises instantly in the mind of an American: how can one trust a newspaper operated by a political party to publish an unvarnished account of the day's events? Is a newspaper owned by Gaullists, Communists or Socialists a party organ or just a political tract? Can it even be called a newspaper?

Of thirteen newspapers published in Paris, two are Gaullist, two Communist, one Catholic, one Socialist and the rest moderate or right wing. The party organs, published in standard format, have all the appearance of conventional newspapers. They are served with world-wide reports by American and British agencies, but the selection and editing varies with the ownership. The story of sensational value to the Communist organ is not found in the others.

How does the French newspaper reader fare in this political fragmentation of the press? To secure a balanced picture of events upon which to base an opinion, he would have to read many newspapers. This he cannot afford to do. Prices have gone up to ten or more francs per copy. Therefore, under the barrage of partisan presentation, he depends far more than in the past upon the journal that reflects his own political leaning.

Partisan newspapers, I believe, are adding to the chronic state of political instability in France. A Gaullist deputy in the National Assembly, for example, must reflect not only the discipline of his party, but the attitudes of his constituents who read nothing but the Gaullist press. His decisions at critical moments in Assembly voting are now influenced not only by the unbending rule of the party leader, but by the wishes of a constituency marshalled by a partisan press. Communists and Socialists are under similar pressure, and consequently similarly unwilling to compromise.

My inquiry into the distribution of French news revealed a situation which would be intolerable in the United States. Most

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French newspapers at home and in the colonies are served by Agence France-Presse, an organization replacing the old and famous Havas agency. The general manager of Agence France-Presse is appointed by the government. He operates the agency supposedly on a non-partisan principle, but he cannot be blind to the government point of view or to that of a transient cabinet. Nevertheless, he is supposed to carry to the press all newsworthy releases.

Criticism of Europe's partisan press brings the counter-argument that the American press is partisan to a certain extent. However, no one would suggest that American newspapers, regardless of how raucous or sensational they may be, were accepting subsidies from either of the political parties; or that they were founded by editors who would ignore the views of their opponents.

Western Germany's press came into being under the careful supervision of the victorious powers. Huge sums were spent in the American zone to insure that newspapers and periodicals were democratic and free of Nazi influence. By precept and example, German editors were shown the road to honest publishing and fair editing. Yet it is obvious to any observer that from the ashes of war there emerged a partisan press, devoted to party interests, subsidized in part by political parties and edited with an eye to party aggrandizement. Defending the partisan character of newspapers, Germans say that they are always assured of an opposition press no matter what party or coalition is in power. In other words, the newspaper has no other reason for existence than the defense or support of a party.

One hopeful sign in the picture of Europe's press is the prosperity of one or two newspapers in each country which strive for honesty in news editing and selection. These are the papers whose large circulations provide an income that leads to independence. They may start with the aid of a party, but as they grow, they slowly discard their shackles. These are the newspapers which will survive the fierce competition and will eventually be strong enough to resist influences that rob the public of an honest presentation of facts.

Much can be done through education to strengthen the will of editors, journalists and the public. The International Press Institute, organized in New York and with an office in Switzerland manned

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by eminent journalists, should be the means of a great missionary work. It can spread the knowledge of freedom of information, and wherever moves are made to infringe upon the freedom of the press, the Institute can join forces with those who will oppose these moves.

If any spur is needed to encourage the people of Europe to guard their press against controls of any sort, they need only look at the unstable economy and the unhappy conditions in Spain, where, since the end of the civil war, the press has been under strict government censorship. Freedom of the press does not exist. The public has no free access to government departments. Only that portion of the news considered favorable by the censors is allowed to filter into the newspapers. Criticism of the state or the single leader of the state is not tolerated; glorification of the state is a primary aim of editorial comment. Foreign correspondents are permitted residence but can be expelled for criticism of the government, no matter how justified the criticism may be. Thus, the results of an exhaustive inquiry into Spain's economy by an American commission, presented by Claude R. Porter, European head of the Mutual Security Organization, revealed Spain to be the poorest country in Europe. While Spanish diplomats seek American aid, only the most gratifying reports of her internal affairs are printed by docile editors acting as an adjunct of government.

A situation similar to that now existing in Spain was foreseen by the American founding fathers when they, in most unequivocal terms, forbade our Congress to make any law abridging freedom of press or freedom of speech. The First Amendment to the Constitution has stood through the years as the great defense of freedom of information. It reveals the profound understanding of men who had experienced the effects of restrictive codes, bureaucratic regulations and tyrannical interference by the government.

Safe within this bastion, American newspapermen view with increasing alarm the efforts underway, even in the United Nations, to break down the defenses of a free press by means of elaborate definitions and codes. These efforts, ostensibly designed to place a greater responsibility upon the press, are in fact the weapons that will eventually be turned against those who are too openly critical.

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The Reader Replies

THE READER REPLIES *regularly carries miscellaneous comments by readers on various articles which have appeared in the magazine. All communications should be addressed to: The Editor,* THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, *Phi Beta Kappa Hall, Williamsburg, Va., and should not exceed 300 words in length except on request. Because of limitations of space, the Editors cannot guarantee to print all letters received. Letters intended for publication in the Winter number should be received by October 10.*

—EDITOR.

Cudgels for Correctness

Crushed down upon the brows of would-be writers, not professionals but thought-gifted, is a fatal mania for correctness which lames their pens and otherwise works them woe. So says, in effect, Mr. Donald Lloyd in the Summer AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

I am convinced that no such mania exists or has existed, but that if it ever shows up in America, it should be welcomed with wide-open arms.

Our writing delinquency is easily explained by the meager, monotonous language diet in our lower schools—a long story. Radical wrongness is visible in the products of these schools, who go through life torn between "for him and me" and "for him and I." If Mr. Lloyd taught foreign languages to college students, he would know what I mean, and might offer me a handshake.

Our people in general do not read anything that is at all difficult for them to read; that is, that demands of them linguistic information and sensitivity. And correspondingly, they do not write because they cannot write—not because they are afraid of criticisms of their form and style. Without words, how shall they compose? No words, no springboards for thought.

I can mention Hall, Bloomfield and Fries without alteration of pulse or stoppage of breath, and I see no reason why others who are interested in language should bow down and subscribe to their decrees. Notice how delightfully careful these gentlemen are to express themselves in flawless, universally acceptable terms. Mr. Lloyd is just as cautious. The several intentional or unintentional deviltries in his article are quite innocent; and I seize the occasion to applaud his consistent "correctness." May he never come under the blight of his own adjurations! Long live correctness!

A. M. WITHERS
Concord College
Athens, West Virginia

You Better Had

I noted in Donald J. Lloyd's "Our National Mania for Correctness" that, when Mr. Lloyd's gas station attendant shut off the pump after the gasoline had foamed to the top of the tank, he said, "When you see whitecaps, you better stop." Then Mr. Lloyd, "lost in admiration," replied, "You better had."

"You better had!" Who's being maniacally correct there? Of course, Mr. Lloyd would have said, or should have, "You'd better," or, simply, "You better."

BROTHER CORMAC PHILIP, F.S.C.
Manhattan College
Riverdale, New York

Mania for Consistency

Mr. Lloyd ("Our National Mania for Correctness," AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Summer, 1952) makes, it seems to me, a molehill into a mountain. And, at least once, he slips

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badly. On page 285, he notes the "simple, direct, workmanlike style" of the eighteenth century and then observes, "with the end of that century we go into the foggy, foggy darkness, and God knows whether we shall ever find our way out of it. . . ."

Shades of Lamb, Hazlitt, De Quincey, Jane Austen, Thackeray, Dickens—to say nothing of Coleridge, Carlyle, Pater, George Eliot: the list is endless! Students today read them, understand them, like them. Is Mr. Lloyd thinking about the twentieth century (Joyce, Stein & Co.)? Does he make allowances for the destructive influence of editors' and publishers' form sheets on the flavor of style? (The form sheets make an author impotent. And if a student writes something worth publishing, he will suffer, too.) This topic demands another paper—"Our National Mania for Consistency."

ROBERT WITHINGTON
Smith College
Northampton, Massachusetts

Echt Amerikanische Getöse

Mr. Bradford Smith suggests we are selling America short (AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Summer, 1952). But a small effort on my part to sell America long indicates that other nations just don't want to listen.

Three years ago, the editor of a German women's magazine, given my name by a friend on a cultural mission abroad, wrote me that she was interested in explaining America to her readers and would like me to write a few articles of specified length on the subject. She had heard that we have a fine children's theater in Anchorage, and suggested I begin with two articles about that.

Naturally, I took considerable pains to write something that would convey to German women how a group of American mothers in a small town, decided that a theater in which our children could act and practice stagecraft offered stimulation for many kinds of interest. After we got going came what I hope is another typically American feature—we were able to persuade the Jefferson County Recreation Board to contribute half our budget, provided we took all other responsibility. We engaged a talented director, but I tried to show, in my articles, how much work in costuming, publicity and policy-making continued to be carried on by the hard-working housewives of the community.

I wrote the story in English. My editor, who had been an exchange student in America, was to turn it into German. Imagine my astonishment to find the five pages about the grassroots and democratic character of our enterprise condensed into merely three German words: *echt Amerikanische Getöse*. *Getöse* is a word suggestive of the confusion at the bottom of a waterfall. Plainly, the only point of interest to my German editor was that, after all this "pure American nonsense," we managed to put on *A Midsummer Night's Dream.*

PRISCILLA ROBERTSON
Anchorage, Kentucky

Good Teachers and Bad Psychiatrists

The Summer number of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR contains an article by John S. Diekhoff, "Let Mr. Chips Fall Where He May." I am impelled to comment.

Here is something like a cooling breeze on a hot day; here are intimations that pupils need not have teachers who forget they are good teachers in trying to become bad psychiatrists. As a psychiatrist working over many years with children, parents, teachers, I have observed able and adequate teachers repeatedly concerning themselves with the "unique personality needs" of students to a degree that amounts to medico-psychiatric concern and that belittles the capacity of students to make effective contact with ideas and with rules. To note the author saying, "The greater part of his task is not to persuade at all. It is to expedite learning," is refreshing, and restores teaching to essential dignity in its own right instead of making it a diffusion of parent, counselor, psychiatrist, et al.

To this reader of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, it was a greatly appreciated article.

FORREST N. ANDERSON
Van Nuys, California

(Continued on page 508)

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..... Under Whatever Sky .....

IRWIN EDMAN

Miltons Not Inglorious Nor Mute

"If only he had written what it was in him to write," we frequently hear it said and often say ourselves. Or if it is not writing, then it is painting or composing or mathematical theory. Every campus, every intellectual community is speckled with local celebrities of whom much has been expected and of whom, on the basis of a brochure written in youth, a quip got off in middle age, much is still anticipated. On the basis of large works still undone and often uncontemplated, it is still locally realized what gods are being, quite knowingly, entertained. The prophet is without honor but *not* in his own country.

Occasionally the celebrity of the diocese commits the imprudence of actually writing one book, composing one symphony, painting one painting. Then we are told by his immediate circle, the pygmies surrounding the giant (real pygmies, as was once remarked), that somehow the true quality of the man never gets onto the printed page, the score, the canvas. One must have known him in his private person to get the total or grand (or indeed, any) effect.

There can hardly be a campus or a coterie today that does not contain some talkative, locally glorious Milton who, if he had only done what he could have, should have done, would, we are told, have set other worlds than his own on fire. Such people do sometimes attain an immortality, brief, vicarious and legendary. They appear in other people's memoirs. They are constantly having books dedicated to them. They are quoted orally by their disciples and friends. Occasionally, someone quotes, presumably verbatim, one of their sallies or taps their wells of wisdom. To those never exposed to the alleged personal magic of the county Socrates, the aphorism raises a doubt as to whether a whole book along the same lines would have been quite the masterpiece its admirers, sight unseen, claim for it. Sometimes the notes of the great man are gathered together by a sedulous devotee, and a preface speculates on what a grand system he himself might have made of them, or says, "Perhaps it was one of his virtues that he had no system at all."

Better all around, perhaps, that the local genius remain on his local pedestal, that the provincial Pascal live on in an oral tradition only. It is, after all, something to be able to talk well; and for the immediate community, a winning personality is perhaps a more *agreeable* gift than a conquering mind.

Disillusions of Grandeur

My friend had been talking of some notable whose reputation and success he regarded as far beyond that notable's merits or capacities.

"But he has his talents," I said.

"He has one talent *in excelsis*," he replied. "He has a gift, quite unusual, for getting everyone else to take him at his own high valuation."

"But I doubt that he does value himself so highly," I said. "He simply has a talent for making other people think of him what he wishes he could think of himself."

My friend was right about the impression, and, knowing our man well, I thought I was right about the fact. There was no question that our notable impressed people at once with his competence, and that his own confidence infected everyone else with whom he worked. He had but to breathe a conviction and it seemed to be an utterance of the truth; he had only to suggest an idea and everyone wondered why he had not thought of it himself first. The modest brisk authority with which he spoke on the weather or on the world would persuade one man in a conference, or a crowd in an auditorium. Among the people who

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seemed unfailingly persuaded of his universal rightness was himself.

But those of us who knew him well knew him better, and we knew that he had a tragic secret. He was able instantaneously to persuade everyone *but* himself. He had an unhappy memory of the times his convictions were wrong, his ideas failures, his opinions silly. His talent, invaluable in his career, was that, in the presence of a public, he could keep those memories hidden, and keep his doubts—even from himself.

A Joke's a Joke

The stranger, who turned out to be a New Zealander, was standing next to me at Hyde Park Corner near the Marble Arch. The crowd had been good-naturedly heckling one another. The wilder the invective, the more the crowd laughed; often the utterers of the invective laughed at themselves, and so did the speaker at whom their barbs were directed.

"Wonderfully good-humored crowd, these people," he said. "It's the sense of humor that's saved England."

Doubtless. And how often it seems to be true that the sense of humor is a prudent protection against all fanaticisms, against the bitterness of passions without a sense of proportion. How often the sense of the ridiculous saves one from dogmatism, from rigidity, from excess. Nobody with a sense of humor, one tells oneself, could possibly take himself too seriously, or get carried away with the madness of even a good cause carried too far. Dictators do not generally have a sense of humor; nor do revolutionaries.

Dictators and revolutionaries are not, alas, the only ones who are opaque to the funny side of things. Certain poets and novelists, some very great ones among them, have been quite solemn blokes. Neither in print nor in legend do they stand out for a sense of the whimsical or the absurd. Tolstoy was not given to saying things with his tongue in his cheek, nor Henry James. Michelangelo seems not to have been given to anecdote, nor Beethoven to *bons mots*. Empires are not usually built by humorists—nor are epic poems or luxury liners.

It is all very well to say we could do without imperialism or epic poetry or deluxe travel. But even in our private lives, a sense of humor can be the enemy of some of the things, at least, for which poets and psychologists and theologians have valued life. There are moments of ecstasy or depths of feeling when we would not thank anyone for reminding us (we are ashamed to recall them ourselves) of the ridiculous aspects of our ardors and endurances. It would be embarrassing to a martyr, as the flames began to play about him, to see suddenly how silly was martyrdom; to the lover to sense the absurdity of passion, just as he was about to embrace the beloved. A joke is a joke, but still—

The Great Chain of Being Alive

Occasionally, one meets very old people, still in possession of their faculties, who recall from their childhood very old people they had known, who in their turn had known Garibaldi or Lincoln or Flaubert. At such moments, one makes the discovery that one had never really quite believed in the past. One had, indeed, given history lip service. Caesar *did* cross the Rubicon; Socrates drank hemlock; Napoleon was defeated at Waterloo; Lee surrendered at Appomattox; Brahms composed symphonies and drank beer. The famous events of the past are in a faint way credible, or rather, they are at once completely credible and unbelievably faint. For actuality, they are not in a class with current generals and statesmen or television stars. It is only when someone *we* have known tells us of someone *he* once knew who remembered some grand figure saying some small informal thing, that we wholly believe. Thus, Bertrand Russell, recalling seeing Gladstone when he, Bertrand Russell, was very young and Gladstone quite old, recalls only Gladstone asking why the port was served in a claret glass.

The personal detail conveyed by a person, the living expression reported by one still living—such things convince us that the past was once present in a way of which

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neither the historian nor the historical novelist can quite convince us. For once, in a way, we acknowledge the continuity of the past with our present.

As real as the present, we say, or one with it? But how real *is* the present to us, when, for the most part, we know it by hearsay, by newsprint, by electric image? Did we once see Nehru plain? We saw him on television. Did we once hear Roosevelt, or did we hear him on the radio? Even when on occasion we do meet some noted figure, we meet him in the stage setting of a public occasion, or the almost equal artifice of an arranged interview. The great man has fallen into the habit of talking like a "great man," a modest great man. And we, awed, talk to him not as to another human being, but as to an institution. We ourselves begin to feel as if we must speak in the manner becoming one who is talking to a figure soon to become History, for are we not, for that brief instance, part of *his* history, and will not *he* soon be one with the immortals?

If the Red Slayer Thinks He Slays

It is hard to resist the flattery of being called upon for advice. Wisdom would suggest that one should not give any, and for all the obvious reasons. One's advice will not be taken, one knows even—or, perhaps, especially—if it is sound. Increasingly, experience shows one the multiplicity of alternatives and the dubiousness of anyone's—above all, one's own—competence to judge. And yet—the young man, or sometimes, most shockingly, the old one, or at least one older than oneself, comes in gratifying sincerity to ask one's counsel, to seek one's aid. It is impossible not to take on the tone of an elder statesman, a wise uncle, an experienced friend. "There is no question in my mind. It is perfectly clear that, knowing you as I do, from my knowledge of him, of her, of the world, of the profession . . . I don't expect you to take my advice, but if you want my frank opinion . . . You will perhaps not like to hear. . . ." The clichés rush to the lips, and one says one or many of them. Before one knows it, one has embarked on being an oracle.

And like oracles, one protects oneself with prudent alibis, with advance "outs." "I may, of course, be totally wrong. . . . I don't pretend to speak with authority. . . . There are obviously two sides to the question."

It is hard to be an adviser. It is almost as hard to be an advisee. By the time one is middle-aged, one knows the futility of seeking advice. No one can make a decision for anyone else. One says that when one is advising others. One feels it when one seeks advice. When the time comes, one knows that one will not follow advice, except the sort one wants; what will decide will be the inability to rest longer, undecided. But still, at a major or minor crisis, one asks one's friends. Should or shouldn't (I) get married, change a job, write a treatise, buy a house in the country, read this book or see that play? It is fortunate that our advisers do not see us when *we* are advisers; it is fortunate that our advisees do not overhear us when, humble and bewildered, we are seeking counsel ourselves.

Plus Ça Change

The more it changes, the more it remains the same. This thought has always been considered melancholy and a little tinged with cynicism. But with the alarming rapidity of change in the present age, the fact that things do not change is something to be said in their favor. How very agreeable it is to come back to friends, to places, to institutions, and to find that they haven't changed; and where can one do this better than in England? The Englishman, of course, denies this, and he points to the cataclysmic changes, the breaking up of the great estates, the vanishing of the amenities of life (including servants, sugar, foreign travel), the rush, the haste, the anxiety, the threat of atom bombs and of sponsored radio.

But though butter is scarce, the bread is cut as thin as ever; and there is still, though tea is rationed, the institution of tea. The good-humored courtesy, the offhand intelligence, the almost universal gentleness of manners—these have not altered, and politeness is so usual that its very occasional ab-

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sence comes almost as a shock. There is the muffled poetry of English understatement, and the same soft sunlight—as if it were autumn even in summer, and always early evening.

Home Thoughts from Abroad

After almost a year's absence, thoughts of home become almost as exotic as are images of foreign parts when one is at home. One begins to picture one's native haunts with the eye of a visitor, and of a visitor free from obligation. One forgets the interruptions, the responsibilities, the daily detail. Life at home, or so one comes to conceive of it, is a perpetual holiday of seeing only the friends one wants to see, doing the things one wants to do, of being always at ease among one's intimates and as free as one is in a foreign country on vacation.

It is clear that all this is an illusion. In a ten minutes' walk in New York, one is among strangers; it is not even necessary to walk that far. One is surrounded by unknowns in the very apartment building in which one lives. And once there, the thousand interruptions, obligations, interconnections and commitments one has forgotten will spring to life again. It will not be a fortnight before one begins to dream of those long days abroad where, unknown and unknowing, one was, for the time being, free.

And yet, on second thought, is it not this which is the one often unacknowledged pleasure of homecoming—to return to a world where, at least to a small circle, one is known, and where there is a small world that one intimately knows? Is it not a relief and a pleasure to return to a scene which one can take for granted?

The traveler lost in the desert is said to have sudden mirages of the green of trees, of the flow of water. Thus, after long absence, does one begin to have vistas of home. One sees just where one's books are lodged in one's own shelves; one hears the familiar friendly voices; one begins to imagine with acute vividness even the sound of the telephone—at this distance not a jangle—and the voices, how agreeable at this remove, of those who will so soon be reminding us of our duties and our omissions.

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..... The Revolving Bookstand .....

The Horns of Our Dilemma

THE IRONY OF AMERICAN HISTORY. By Reinhold Niebuhr. *New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1952. 174 pp. $2.50.*

Reviewed by JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

In his most recent work, the Roman Catholic Santayana dismissed the United States as an effective world leader on the ground that Americans are too idealistic and too philanthropic to operate successfully in a contingent universe. In the present short but very brilliant and original book, a leading Protestant theologian, without reference to and possibly without familiarity with Mr. Santayana's treatise, deals with considerations curiously similar and arrives at conclusions not so much contrary as completely transformed by a different coloring. According to his definition, ironies can be perceived only by a detached observer who is critical but not hostile, and because Mr. Niebuhr fulfills the conditions of this definition, he escapes the cynically flavored pessimism of Santayana.

The irony in American history with which he is concerned is that reaching its height in the familiar paradox of a nation ready to drop bombs on the helpless in order that righteousness may prevail. But the originality of his position lies in his refusal to accept either of the current resolutions of the paradox. It is not sufficient to say either that bombs are righteous or that we should not use them. It is, on the other hand, highly necessary that we should understand how the dilemma arose and why it is not unique but typical, the inevitable result of the refusal, made long ago in the history of Western civilization, to recognize the limitations imposed by corrupt human nature and the contingencies of the physical world.

This refusal originated when the Enlightenment began to assume that man and society were perfectible, that men would be perfectly happy, benevolent and virtuous when they had abolished corruption in government and achieved a perfect mastery of nature. Today communism represents the most extreme and most narrow version of the doctrine of perfectibility—the most narrow because it assumes that only one thing, the institution of capitalism, stands in the way of Utopia; the most extreme because it is the most absolutely ruthless in dealing with the enemies of what it believes to be righteous. But the American paradox is only less violent than the Russian. We are less fanatical and we have, therefore, more scruples. But we too are committed by popular religion, by sociology and by psychology, as well as by politics, to the assumption that physical nature can be mastered and that man can be so perfectly "adjusted" to his environment as to become wholly good and wholly happy. Moreover, we too are willing, within limits, to use our power to achieve the proposed result.

This is not a book which concerns itself much with details of policy. Though it seems clear that Mr. Niebuhr is far from advocating non-resistance, and that he regards violence and confusion as inevitable for a long time to come, he is primarily concerned with the long-range effect of fundamental attitudes. The paradox will never be resolved so long as our thinking is dominated by the ideal of perfectibility; it will not be resolved until we recognize the limits imposed upon life in this world by the fact that man is a creature who cannot hope wholly to escape from the element of sinfulness in his soul.

Inevitably, readers conditioned to the

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH is Brander Matthews Professor of Dramatic Literature at Columbia University.

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secular character of contemporary thought will wonder whether these convictions can be stated in other than theological terms. Perhaps Mr. Niebuhr is right in his apparent assumption that theology alone makes them perfectly clear and forceful. But there have always been secularists who were not commited to the doctrine of perfectibility, and when they say "You can't change human nature," they are sometimes implying very much the thesis of this book. "The remedy for the ills of life," said Samuel Johnson, "is palliative rather than radical."

Of Human Achievement

WITNESS. By Whittaker Chambers. *New York: Random House. 1952. 808 pp. $5.00.*

Reviewed by ROBERT RAYNOLDS

Witness is an impressive report on a representative crime of our day. The crime is treason. This particular instance, now known as the Chambers-Hiss Case, had a theatrical exposure; but the same sordid crime has been committed over and over again in the past thirty years in almost any country one could name. Whittaker Chambers, who spent thirteen years as an active Communist, seven years in the open Party and six more as an underground espionage agent in New York and Washington, reveals a moral rot in our political life, particularly among young, clever and effective appointees in public office. That many such men and women have engaged in treasonable activity in the name of communism has been attested by a series of confessions and some convictions. The reader of *Witness* is justified in believing that this crime has been repeated many times, and that more persons than Whittaker Chambers were involved in committing it.

The book also persuades me of the probability, without proving the actuality, that the same sort of moral rot persists and the same sort of treason is still being practiced at vital centers of our society.

After thirteen years of subversive and treasonable work, Chambers deserted the Communist conspiracy; a year or so later he partially but ineffectually testified against himself and his few familiars; then, almost ten years later, when subpoenaed by the House Committee on Un-American Activities, he publicly informed against and helped to destroy the particular pocket of treason in which he had worked. This is an ugly story; but it is better that he confessed the crime and stopped the action than it would have been if he had protected himself by silence (or by suicide, which he attempted) and perhaps allowed the crime to continue.

Witness is also a dreary modern autobiography, eloquent and miserable, with many parallels in the modern novel of spiritual negation, from *Madame Bovary* to *The Naked and the Dead.* It is written from a center of pain, in that mood of German romanticism which favors morbid introspection and encourages a man to misconstrue himself as the protagonist of the human race. This mood of hate-breeding solitude is evident in the Communist Manifesto, in Nietzsche, in fascism, and in public men at least as far back as Caligula, whose power was exceeded only by his egotism, and who, in the midst of his cruelties, would often quote: "Let them hate me, so they but fear me." There are characters of the same destructive *hybris* in Dostoevski's novels; but *Witness* is as if one of Dostoevski's characters—say Raskolnikov—had written his own life, or as if Kurtz, instead of Conrad, had told us the tale of *The Heart of Darkness.* The tragic religious insight of Dostoevski, the profound human integrity of Conrad are lacking. The story is impressive, but miserable and almost hopeless. It reveals again that those actions within a family which hurt its members generate an evil society.

Witness offers a political philosophy for our time. Having drenched himself in the slavish evil of communism and revolted from it, Chambers claims "every sincere break with Communism is a religious ex-

ROBERT RAYNOLDS is the author of the recently published *The Sinner of Saint Ambrose.*

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perience. . . . A Communist breaks because he must choose at last between irreconcilable opposites—God or Man, Soul or Mind, Freedom or communism. . . . History is cluttered with the wreckage of nations that became indifferent to God, and died. . . ." He claims that ex-Communists are the best interpreters to waken us to the needed vision and faith, for only they know the real evil of communism. The evil of inordinate arrogance of soul—*hybris*—has been known for centuries; the evil of inordinate arrogance in government has been known for ages; many people have recognized the evil inherent in communism and have stood against it when it first offered its deceptive lure and before it revealed its brutal act. Chambers, however, is probably right in his claim that the social revolution of our time in our country drifts toward these evils. A powerful government is under compelling temptation to try to accomplish at once, by amoral fiat, good things which can only be accomplished by the slow process of moral growth. A series of amoral fiats, whatever their intention, will simply produce an amoral society.

Witness is a testament of pain; it is a man crying out from his ordeal for our compassion, our understanding and our belief. Chambers says, after a moment of religious experience: "I only knew that I had promised God my life, even, if it were His will, to the death. This is my ultimate witness." It is, however, a sad witness, not rising to serenity or peace, but pausing at the end of the book in the exhaustion of pain. He finds that he and his wife have "the sense that we have lived our lives and the rest is a malingering." Only malingering, nearly twenty years after they both had touched the nadir of evil when they agreed to her having an abortion so as not to hamper his Communist work. That last step, by her final choice and his submission, they did not take; but their way back was bitter and long.

Some people have tried to dismiss Chambers and his book with a clever epithet of aspersion from politics or religion or medicine. He protests too much the meaning of facts; but when he simply describes events, the facts are there. The grim bulk of his testimony to the operation of moral rot in our society still stands; and epithets of dismissal, though they may close the mind, do not remove the danger.

No man should be defamed for his spiritual suffering. But does this man, by his life or by his book, bear witness to a light for other men to live by?

For me, the answer is yes. We are learning that the wreckage of the human soul does not begin on the stage of history or on the altar of eternity; it begins at home in the intimate household of the family. The first, the closest, the most direct human relationships are those which try our souls before we act out our crimes, our follies and our goodness in the world. Here is a man who broke away from a warped childhood in a bitter family to walk in the ways of evil. Communism is an expression in action of the wish for suffering and death, and men become Communists in the solitude of hatred. This man, in his solitude of hatred and the wish for death, was touched by the human warmth of his wife and his children. He protests too much his love for them, when merely protesting; but when he is simply describing the things he watched his wife and his children do, there falls upon them and comes from them a light with which no writer could endow them unless he loved them. Whether by an intuition of charity, or by a reader's accretion of motes of light from the whole dark shadow of the book, I see the man turn about, cease destructive action, and offer his life—not against evil, not to an abstract God—but in pain, in public torment and in love to his wife and children who had reached him with their love. I see a lost man so far find himself that he undertook, first through ten years of protective labor and then through the ordeal of public self-exposure, to build honor, goodness and strength into the lives of the three people he loved. Actions such as this are the meaning of manhood. They are the beginning and the renewal of good society. Herein, like a kernel of light in a burden of darkness, shines his witness.

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THE NOTE-BOOKS OF MATTHEW ARNOLD. Edited by Howard Foster Lowry, Karl Young and Waldo Hilary Dunn. *London and New York: Geoffrey Cumberlege, Oxford University Press. 1952. 656 pp. $10.00.*

Reviewed by LIONEL TRILLING

Some fifty years ago Matthew Arnold's daughter, Lady Sandhurst, published a little volume called *Matthew Arnold's Note-Books*. These were not what we commonly expect an author's notebooks to be—they contained no original observations, no personal memoranda, or germinal notions, or early drafts. They were, instead, a collection of quotations from his reading which Arnold copied into his pocket diaries. He did not do this as a scholar stores up notes for future use, but in order to fix his mind upon them in meditation, to bind them upon his mind, we might say, like phylacteries on the brow. To this practice of his, Arnold was faithful from the diary of 1852 until the entry on the day of his death in 1888, and Lady Sandhurst chose but a very small portion of the many *sententiae* he accumulated. Now they have all been given to us in a large and handsome volume by three notable scholars whose labors have extended over a quarter-century and have been of the most exacting sort—for they have identified all the quotations which Arnold set down with incomplete ascription or none at all, and they have followed his reading through six languages, including a wide range of periodicals.

The book they give us is not, I think, one that will be *read*. Opinions will differ, and no doubt some will reckon this among the works that are to be kept at hand for picking up at odd moments, or before sleep, or when work goes badly. But I believe that those who will read it even in this way will be few. This is not Arnold's fault or in the least a reflection on him. Although Arnold did indeed say—"half jokingly"—that the extracts would make a volume of "price-

✪ Novelist, critic and teacher, LIONEL TRILLING is the author of *Matthew Arnold*, a critical biography.

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less worth," he did not choose the extracts for general interest, but for their peculiar usefulness to him, and primarily for their moral usefulness. One has the impression—whatever the statistics might say—that most of the quotations are praises of, or spurs to, or devices for the life of morality, and that the comments on other subjects—on art, society, politics, history—are in effect an intellectual basis for the explicitly moral concern. And the truth is that the content of morality as Arnold saw it was very simple indeed, too simple to make interesting reading. Arnold's admired Bishop Wilson, for example, is no doubt a gentle and gracious mind, and we respect Arnold's devotion to him, but Bishop Wilson cannot be called an *interesting* moralist in a day when the criteria of moral thought are likely to be those established by Pascal, Kierkegaard, Dostoevski and Nietzsche. For Arnold, the moral life is never touched by the irony and paradox which we are likely to suppose are its essence.

And yet this simplicity, although it does not make interesting reading, makes one of the most interesting facts about Arnold himself. We do not meet it for the first time in the *Note-Books*—indeed, I think it is fair to say that we do not learn anything about Arnold from the *Note-Books* that we did not know before. But much of what we have known is emphasized and enforced upon us, and more than anything else the nature of Arnold's moral preoccupation. And it is impossible not to be transfixed with wonder and pity as the *Note-Books* press in upon us how very simple Arnold took morality to be and how hard to come by he thought it was. Of problem or dilemma we get no hint. Morality is understood to be no more than the suppression of carnality, of vanity, of personality, of inclination; it is doing one's duty; it is putting oneself into accord with the purposes of the universe, with the will of God. The moral maxims quoted—from Scripture, from the Greek dramatists, from Marcus Aurelius, from à Kempis, from George Herbert, from Lessing and Goethe, from Miche-

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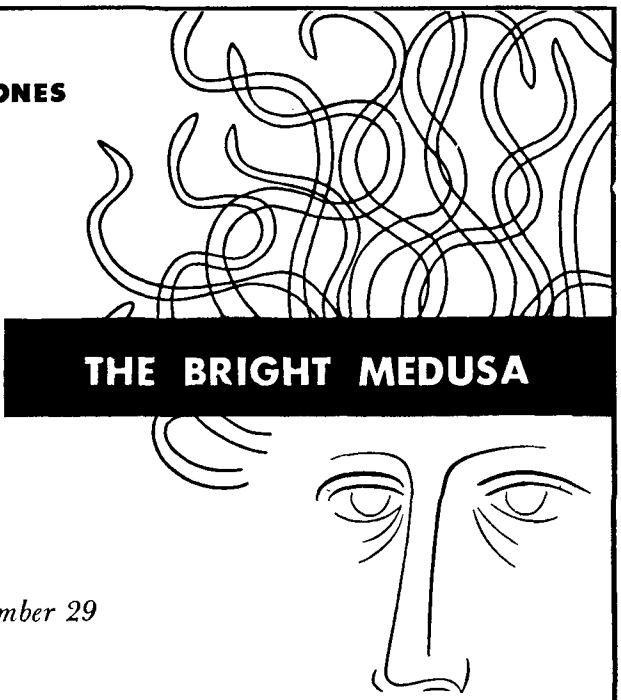

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let and George Sand—all have it as their intention to spur on the will to moral effort, to speak of the need for abnegation, self-subordination, and unremitting work, or to suggest the means of doing what seems so very hard.

This must be striking to us who cannot believe that morality is so simple as this, and who, at the same time, do not believe that its complexity makes it so very difficult as to need daily conscious renewal and rededication of effort. As I say, it is not a new thing that we learn about Arnold, for it is implicit in his "conduct is three-fourths of life," a proportion on one occasion raised to five-sixths or seven-eighths, and in all his writing on religion; and it is implicit in all his criticism. But it is rather a different thing to have it in, as it were, its daily insistence, in these notes which were the instrument of devotion of a great man.

To experience the full pathos of Arnold's piety of moral life, we must think of the notes as they were written down among the memoranda of engagements, and jottings of questions in geography and arithmetic for school examinations—the evidence of the crowded, depressing life in which Arnold felt it necessary to make such an effort of good will. Now and then the accumulation of maxims is punctuated by a list of "rules" about not sleeping late, and schedules of hours, and half hours, for writing or reading or laying out the next day's work. The only other personal notes are of the death of his sons—"Little Basil died." "Dear little Basil was buried." "Tommy died." "Tommy's funeral." Then a year later, "Tommy!" and the sentence from the *Imitatio* that he had written the year before, "*Leva igitur faciem tuam ad coelum!*" and a year later, "Tommy!" and the same sentence; and the year after that, "Tommy!" And then, some six months later: "Budge died."

But the volume is by no means all pathos. Only infrequently do the notes serve Arnold's intellectual as apart from his moral life, but when they do, they make the occasion of pleasure, as when we first come upon the famous quotations from Mr. Roe-

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buck and Sir Charles Addersley, or Macaulay's praise of Milton's nobility of prose followed by passages from Milton full of violence and spite, or a page of quotations which, taken together, constitute the essential doctrine of *Culture and Anarchy*. And although I have said that there is no irony or paradox in Arnold's morality, the mind is certainly challenged and piqued by the four notations over a period of years—1875, 1877, 1878, 1888—of this quotation drawn from a magazine article about its author: "Society is a sort of organism on the growth of which conscious efforts can exercise little effect. K. Marx."

A Pioneering Venture

THE PLANETS: Their Origin and Development. By Harold C. Urey. *New Haven: Yale University Press. 1952. 245 pp. $5.00.*

Reviewed by

CECILIA PAYNE-GAPOSCHKIN

Dr. Urey has written a monumental book, a book that will leave its mark on the history of astronomy. Science has become so specialized that its branches tend to grow individually without mutual influence. Rarely has one man the scope to unite two branches, but the great advances in science are made when the chasms are bridged. The fusion of physics and astronomy produced the science of astrophysics. The application of physical chemistry to astronomy has possibilities equally vast.

Astronomy has undergone a fundamental change during the past two decades. Most spectacular is the widening of space horizons, the study of objects at greater distances than earlier generations had thought possible. Equally significant is the recognition of time-horizons, the study of change within the time framework, the emergence of cosmogony as a science. Astronomers to-

✪ CECILIA PAYNE-GAPOSCHKIN is Phillips Astronomer at the Harvard College Observatory.

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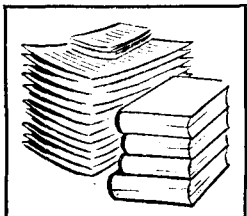

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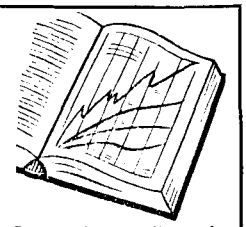

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day see the solar system, not as the catastrophic product of a pre-existing sun, but as part of the pattern of the development of a star which is itself projected on the larger pattern of the development of a galaxy.

The modern picture of the evolution of the solar system, as developed by Kuiper and Von Weisäcker (in tune with the main current of astronomical thought), provides Dr. Urey with his text. He amplifies that text, and often goes far beyond it, with the vast resources of physical chemistry. "Phenomena observed in nature," he writes, ". . . are always very complicated, so much so that the details escape the capacity of the human mind." The wealth of information that he applies to the problems of the solar system gives a foretaste of the complexity of the new science. "Most phenomena in nature," he reminds us, "cannot be described in mathematical ways"; it is in this difference from the approach of the astronomer (who acts on the assumption that all phenomena can be so expressed) that the freshness and impact of his treatment appear.

The moon provides Dr. Urey's starting point. He accepts the view, already made plausible by Baldwin, that its surface features are the results of the impact of meteoritic bodies; he differs in believing that the maria are lava flows formed from the meteorites themselves. He goes further than his predecessors in identifying details of the surface with colliding bodies of well determined composition, mass and structure. His analysis of the Imbrium planetesimal, on which he bases several later quantitative arguments, may indeed seem over-confident. He has placed two important conclusions concerning the moon in the category of facts: its composition as representative of that of the protoplanetary material, and its non-equilibrium figure which substantiates the conclusion that it was formed at low temperature. There must be many astronomers who, like the present writer, will turn to a study of the moon's surface detail with a completely new eye.

The terrestrial planets occupy the greater part of the book, and the wealth of illumi-

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nating detail can hardly be assimilated except by repeated readings. The author shows convincingly how the properties of the planets have been governed by the chemical and physical properties of methane, water and ammonia; the two latter played dominant roles in segregating the terrestrial planets, the former in the major planets and especially in the outer zone of comets, while the asteroids "fell between two stools"; on his view they failed to form, rather than being produced by catastrophic disruption of one or more small planets.

The sections that deal with the Earth are full of suggestive detail. Very interesting is the treatment of the changing moment of inertia of our planet as a result of steady sinking of the iron phase into the core, and the suggestion of a possible source of the energy of convection currents (to which the Earth's magnetic field is attributed) in chemical inhomogeneities—a tentative discussion that points to further work. Not less interesting is the suggestion about the chemistry of the primitive ocean, the possibility that life may have originated under reducing conditions or in the translation from reducing to oxidizing conditions.

The structure of the other terrestrial planets is analyzed in great detail. Mars, for instance, is more homogenous than the Earth, and therefore an iron core has not separated as in the case of our planet. Even more interesting is the discussion of the atmospheres of Venus, Earth and Mars. The latter, we can conclude, has passed through Earth-like conditions in the course of its development. Venus must have had water once: "The presence of carbon dioxide in the planet's atmosphere is very difficult to understand unless water was originally present, and it would be impossible to understand if water were present now."

The major planets receive less detailed treatment for the author believes that physical, rather than chemical, processes were most potent in their formation. But the few suggestions, such as that of the origin of the yellow-brown bands on Jupiter, lead one to hope that this phase of the subject will be expanded later. Especially interest-

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ing would be the development of the theory of physico-chemical events at the outer boundary of the solar system, and a more detailed application to the observed properties of the comets.

The book is written in a severely technical style, and probably few besides the author are sufficiently masters both of astronomy and of physical chemistry to appreciate the whole argument. It is, in fact, essentially a series of scientific papers that develop the application of physical chemistry to the known properties and probable development of the solar system. The whole argument is a pioneering venture, and the author recognizes throughout the speculative nature of many of the statements. He has not spoken the final word: rather he has pointed out problems, indicated the tools that can be used in their solution, and surmised what the nature of the solution will be. His work will be the starting point of a large number of investigations and will result in a new knowledge of the solar system, perhaps also in a revision of current theories of its origin.

We may look forward to even wider applications of Dr. Urey's ideas. As astrophysics has dominated the past half-century, astrochemistry may profoundly affect the next. Astronomy is now beginning to grapple with the problems of the composition and properties of the interstellar material, and its interaction with the interstellar gases. The development of stellar systems presents many problems that recall, on a different scale, the problems of the development of a solar system. It is hardly too much to hope that similar methods will be applied here, and that they will lead to results equally far-reaching. Dr. Urey's argument is presented with robust courage and compelling impetuosity; the structure that he has erected is admittedly provisional, but it is of noble outline, and it is founded on the rock of broad knowledge of the physico-chemical properties of matter.

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Brief Comments

JOHN ADAMS AND THE PROPHETS OF PROGRESS. By Zoltán Haraszti. *Harvard. $5.00.*

By reproducing and interpreting the marginal notes that John Adams placed in his copies of several books written by the *philosophes*, Zoltán Haraszti has provided a useful summary of the views of an outstanding, but neglected, American political theorist. Although the author is at times inclined to make Adams more of a republican than the evidence warrants, he is able to demonstrate beyond any doubt that the subject of this volume was both a "great political thinker" and a "representative man" of his age.

THE SPIRIT OF LIBERTY: Papers and Addresses of Learned Hand. Collected, and with an Introduction and Notes, by Irving Dilliard. *Knopf. $3.50.*

This book presents the non-legal papers and addresses of a man whose words "have the savor of wit, the substance of greatness"; who infallibly manifests the tolerance, wisdom and full humanity implicit in his concept of liberty: "The spirit of liberty is the spirit which is not too sure that it is right; the spirit of liberty is the spirit which seeks to understand the minds of other men and women; the spirit of liberty is the spirit which weighs their interests alongside its own without bias; the spirit of liberty remembers that not even a sparrow falls to earth unheeded. . . ."

REVOLUTIONS OF 1848: A Social History. By Priscilla Robertson. *Princeton. $6.00.*

This recent study of the many large and small revolutions which simultaneously flared across Europe in 1848 constitutes a valuable contribution to an understanding of that perplexing period, the problems it solved, and the new ones it created. Mrs. Robertson approaches her material—and it is extensive—with the calm assurance of a scholar who knows her field, has something new to say, and can say it with clarity and skill. The author's point of view makes her study of equal importance to an understanding of why many of these unresolved problems persist a century later.

THE PRIVATE PAPERS OF SENATOR VANDENBERG. Edited by Arthur H. Vandenberg, Jr., with the collaboration of Joe Alex Morris. *Houghton Mifflin. $5.00.*

It is fortunate that Arthur Vandenberg, Jr., has presented this collection to the American reader so soon after his father's death, and it is to be hoped that it will reach an international audience. For out of the simple, everyday phraseology of Senator Vandenberg's diaries, speeches and letters comes a powerful statement of reassurance and reaffirmation of the democratic process.

Aside from its value as a chronicle of the events and attitudes which converted a strong isolationist into an even stronger internationalist, this volume offers an unprejudiced, consistently balanced picture of the American political scene during the last decade.

ECONOMY IN THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT. By Paul H. Douglas. *Chicago. $3.75.*

A straightforward, detailed and urgent plea for economy in the national government. Senator Douglas explains, simply and clearly, how the national budget-making process operates; analyzes its inadequacies; and recommends specific areas and methods by which reductions in national expenditures could be effected. Forceful, frank, often witty, the book nevertheless presents a bleak picture of present waste and inefficiency, and, despite Senator Douglas' good intentions, presents little hope that these will be remedied in the near future.

THE PRICE OF REVOLUTION. By D. W. Brogan. *Harper. $3.50.*

Mr. Brogan does not waste time or words in stating his evaluation of the price of revolution: it is too high. "And if it be answered that revolutions cannot be made with rosewater and that the tree of liberty must be lavishly watered with blood, well, that is a part of the book-keeping of revolution that should not be neglected," he adds.

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The author's bookkeeping is far from systematic, and it is inevitable that a writer who hurls his words and ideas as hard as does this one will occasionally miss his mark. However, the frequent eloquence of his writing together with the basic stability of his thinking, make Mr. Brogan's book a stimulating study.

AMERICAN CAPITALISM: The Concept of Countervailing Power. By John Kenneth Galbraith. *Houghton Mifflin. $3.00.*

In this extremely well-balanced and pragmatic critique of the American economy, Professor Galbraith elaborates a theory which, in effect, is an explanation of the existing economic system, why it continues to function as well as it does, and where its potential threats lie. Crypto-monopoly is inevitable in a highly industrialized society, Professor Galbraith declares. The remedy, in terms of public welfare, is not increased competition but the development of equal and opposed economic power, furthered, if necessary, by government action. *American Capitalism* should be read by a very wide audience. Professor Galbraith's style, notable for its clarity, strength and perceptive good humor, makes the reading an agreeable task.

ONE MAN'S AMERICA. By Alastair Cooke. *Knopf. $3.50.*

These vignettes are the product of one of the most amiable of our British visitors, Alastair Cooke, Washington correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian.* They were originally prepared for the BBC, to give Britons some idea of the interesting, yet decent things that are happening in America. The indecent things, Mr. Cooke thinks, have already received more than ample attention. Yet although aimed at a British audience, these charming essays will give most Americans much information about their own country—and make them think better of it.

WORKING WITH ROOSEVELT. By Samuel I. Rosenman. *Harper. $6.00.*

The story behind the Roosevelt speeches, told by the man who served the President as head of the team that gathered the material for and prepared the preliminary drafts of speeches, from Roosevelt's campaign for the governorship of New York State in 1928 until his death in 1945. Mr. Rosenman gives an honest and revealing appraisal of the man with whom he worked for so many years, and, in his presentation of the background of the major speeches, offers a fascinating account of the years and events so decisive in America's recent history.

RAG, TAG AND BOBTAIL: The Story of the Continental Army, 1775–1783. By Lynn Montross. *Harper. $5.00.*

Through the many little-known diaries and personal letters of civilians, generals and privates of both the American and British armies, eight vital years in American history take on new dimensions. Accompanied by formal historical reports, these contemporary accounts are presented with a storyteller's skill.

In attaining this achievement in popular scholarship, it is unfortunate that Mr. Montross allowed his book to become a too comprehensive review of military history rather than the study of the Continental Army which is promised in his sub-title.

A TWO-PARTY SOUTH? By Alexander Heard. *North Carolina. $4.75.*

Mr. Heard, a professor of political science and now research professor at the Institute for Research in Social Science at the University of North Carolina, has produced the evidence which authenticates the rumor that the solidarity of Southern politics is dissolving and that the trend is toward a two-party system. Associated with the study initiated in 1946 by the University of Alabama Bureau of Public Administration on a Rockefeller Foundation grant to study politics in Southern states, the author is well qualified to undertake this analysis. This result of his research has much to offer to the election-minded reader.

FLAMINGO HUNT. By Paul A. Zahl. Illustrated with line drawings by Fritz Kredel. *Bobbs-Merrill. $3.50.*

Dr. Zahl is a research biologist whose

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interest in studying all living organisms led to an adventurous search on remote Bahama Islands for the nesting grounds of flamingoes. *Flamingo Hunt* is a humorous, lively and scientifically sound account of the three expeditions he took to Andros and Inagua, resulting in steps by the Bahamian Government and the National Audubon Society to prevent the complete extinction of the rare birds. Dr. Zahl has turned an observant and often amused eye on man and bird alike, and has caught for the reader the excitement of his experiences in a world largely ignored by civilization.

ANNE FRANK: The Diary of a Young Girl. Translated from the Dutch by B. M. Mooyaert-Doubleday. Introduction by Eleanor Roosevelt. *Doubleday. $3.00.*

Anne Frank's diary covers the two-year period during which she, her family and a small group of friends hid from the Gestapo in occupied Holland. Anne was thirteen years old at the time the group moved into two storage rooms behind the building which housed the Frank business, fifteen when the hiding place was discovered and raided, and not yet sixteen when she died in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. Her diary offers much more than an account of fear and terror. It is a study of growing up told with the simplicity, insight and wisdom peculiar to children.

ROME AND A VILLA. By Eleanor Clark. *Doubleday. $4.00.*

Eleanor Clark combines an almost incredible sensitivity to the human implications and significance of inanimate objects with an earthy, skeptical humor. She has, in addition, the ability to render precisely the synthesis of her emotional and intellectual response to an object and the qualities of the object itself. Her book about Rome and the villa of the Emperor Hadrian is, of its kind, superlatively fine.

A COMPOSER'S WORLD. By Paul Hindemith. *Harvard. $3.75.*

The nature of music is such that a discussion of its nontechnical aspects—its significance, value, function, etc.—can be extremely difficult. In contrast with the other arts, music contains no explicit reference to the realm of objects and ideas outside itself. In spite of this difficulty, Hindemith carefully examines his "world" and succeeds in throwing fresh light on some of its philosophical as well as technical and practical problems, although his arguments occasionally fall short of full realization.

THE THURBER ALBUM. By James Thurber. Illustrated. *Simon & Schuster. $3.50.*

Nobody has ever known exactly what to do with James Thurber, least of all James Thurber. This book, like his other work, defies classification. It is autobiographical, but it is not autobiography; it is analytical and interpretative, but it is not a book of essays; it is frequently photographic in its accuracy, but it is not realism. It is altogether delightful. Perhaps, though, it should be recommended discreetly; the too utterly sane may find it partly incomprehensible. Some touch of madness and perhaps a spice of sin are necessary in the reader who would really clasp Thurber to his bosom.

YALE COLLEGE: 1871–1921. By George W. Pierson. *Yale. $6.00.*

This is a scholarly and comprehensive history, sketching the administrations of Porter and Dwight with chief emphasis upon the presidency of Arthur Twining Hadley. It is based upon meticulous research in the files of academic documents and upon numerous conversations with college leaders of the era. Lively characterization of faculty personalities and philosophies and an understanding exposition of student habits and attitudes combine to produce a brilliant historical picture. But the author's chief interest lies in the curricular developments and adjustments of the time in which the American liberal arts college entered its critical period. The breadth of Professor Pierson's treatment of these problems has resulted in an important contribution to the social history of the nation.

LOVE IS A WOUND. By Worth Tuttle Hedden. *Crown. $3.75.*

If the creation of character, the evoca-

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tion of psychological drama, and passionate intensity in the writing are qualities which give permanence to literature, Mrs. Hedden's *Love Is A Wound* is a novel which has a far better than average chance of being remembered and read long after the present year. It is the story of a "lifelong, single-hearted devotion"—but devotion which brings wreckage rather than fulfillment, for it involves not two but three people. The scene is the upper South, and the time covers the long sweep of a half century from the 1880's to the 1930's. The story is carried forward powerfully by each of the three characters in turn—the husband, the wife, the wife's sister—and the three voices together make a novel which is a major achievement.

INVISIBLE MAN. By Ralph Ellison. *Random House. $3.50.*

The Negro victimized by a white society crawls into his hole and, at least for the moment, pulls it in after him in this first novel. The hero's epic wandering starts in the South, ends in Harlem; among disillusioning way-stations are college and communism. Ellison possesses one of the first essentials of the novelist: a driving urge to say his say. He also has some of a first novelist's faults: his voice can be shrill, and his fancy way of telling his story does not do justice to his bold, simple thought.

THE CLOSEST KIN THERE IS. By Clara Winston. *Harcourt, Brace. $3.00.*

From the real and progressively imagined hostility of the outside world springs the ultimate destruction of an isolated Vermont farm family. The dominant, ruthlessly and jealously possessive mother is the strongest character in the novel and the one who is presented with the greatest insight and clarity. Because she is credible, we accept the incestuous relationship of Phyllis Dary and her brother Lloyd, inevitable because of their maternally enforced total interdependence. The novel is bare and compact; its horror mounts steadily. If its theme as well as its characters are somewhat limited and isolated, it is, nevertheless, skillfully rendered.

THE ALEXANDRIANS. By Charles Mills. *Putnam's. $4.00.*

A long and richly detailed novel, *The Alexandrians* follows the hundred years from 1839 to 1939 in the life of a Georgia town. The style is elaborate and allusive, and atmosphere and characters are built up carefully and with much skill. Mr. Mills presents the beliefs and changing attitudes of a great number of the town's men and women over the generations; and he centers the novel around the figure of Anna Anderson Redding, born a decade after the town's founding, who lives to see its centennial. *The Alexandrians* is a distinguished novel of the South.

THE GOLDEN HAND. By Edith Simon. *Putnam's. $4.00.*

The deliberate, unhurried tone of this novel of fourteenth-century Britain is established with its "once-upon-a-time" beginning. The author proves herself a master of this style of narration, never allowing her story to ramble without purpose in the five hundred pages which describe the historically unrecorded builders of the Cathedral of St. Hand.

A painter as well as a writer, Mrs. Simon transfers to her fiction the ability to make the delicate details of characterization an integral part of this ambitious portrait of a period.

(Continued from page 485)

Presbyterian Necessity?

Mr. Edward Ryerson's article, "The Leadership of Woodrow Wilson," in the Summer issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, and his analysis of Wilson's failure, reminded me strongly of Albert Schweitzer's discussion, in his book, *Out of My Life and Thought*, of the "failure" of Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus had great dreams and failed, says Schweitzer, because he could not bring them to realization. Was Jesus also suffering from "Presbyterian necessity"?

JOHN COLEMAN
Geneva College
Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania

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